MARX ON RELIGION

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MARX ON RELIGION

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PREFACE

Most of the writings of Karl Marx concerning religion are grouped closely in the years between 1844 and 1849. It makes little sense, therefore, to list them chronologically. I chose, instead, to group them according to various topics. In deciding which writings to include, I took those in which Marx directly addresses religion. In addition, I included writings where Marx was working out his philosophical position of dialectical materialism in opposition to Hegel (whom he called "a theologian"). Also, his major essays on the nature of human work are important because they display for Marx the pathway of what he considered to be our human self-evolution. Finally, I added some very early and other occasional writings that let the reader get a feel for Karl Marx as a person. The two essays by Engels, one on early Christianity and the second on the Peasant War in Germany, add an important historical dimension.

MARX ON RELIGION

Introduction

Karl Marx wanted to dedicate his masterpiece, *Capital,* to Charles Darwin. But the Darwin family prevented it because they didn't want their names associated with the famous social radical. Still, Marx shared with Darwin the same intellectual passion—to understand a world that had suddenly become mysterious.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, missionaries and naturalists were sending home to London and to Paris the most extraordinary descriptions of the diversity of life on planet Earth. It was an unintended effect of European colonialism. Their sketches and specimens had to be cataloged for eventual public display. The natural history museum was being born, and that meant an immense effort at sorting out this astonishing variety of life into some rational pattern, classifying and arranging specimens side by side so that they could be presented as a visual narrative on the museum floor. It required an *understanding* of what you were trying to display.

Simultaneously, the geologists were vastly expanding the notion of the length of time life had existed on Earth, making space in our intellectual imagination for the idea of gradual but enormous change. The fossil record was full of evidence of such change. While climbing in Chile, Darwin found at ten

thousand feet the fossil remains of simple life-forms that had once flourished *at the bottom of the sea.* And the fossil record showed a single direction—from simple to ever more divergent and complex life-forms. Vast time and vast change over time opened the door for the theory of life evolving, and our human life as part of that larger story.

Both Darwin and Marx saw what it meant: Humans *belong to this earth.* This is where we were born and grew and evolved. As Darwin had found the key to unlock the mystery of natural evolution, of how the incredible diversity of life on Earth came to be, so Marx sought to understand the pattern and logic of human evolution in society. Like philosophers before him, what Marx found distinctive about the human animal is our acute degree of self-reflectiveness. He saw this human consciousness as an unfolding process, the result of our continuing interaction with our material environment.

For Marx we are, like all other animals, sensuous and tactile creatures. Self-awareness is our species' way of being in touch with that reality. And the contents of consciousness are a result of that continuing interaction. The engine of that interaction is human work. It is what Marx called our "species being." Work is far more than what we do "to make a living," although that is how most of us think of work today. Human living is not something we "make" but something we do. And for Marx, as a species we do our living in an active way, transforming the material world we live in through our use of tools. The human is the tool-using animal; it is our species-specific characteristic. At first this may seem like crass reductionism, but hold that judgment until you see what he means.

By using tools we transform the material environment upon which we depend for our survival, and in the process we transform ourselves. We first transform ourselves biologically. Marx's friend, Friedrich Engels, wrote a fascinating essay on the human thumb.[1] Today we know that the opposable thumb evolved simultaneously with the higher brain or neocortex; archaeological evidence shows a simultaneous expansion and diversification of the types and uses of tools. Tools put an evolving human thumb together with an evolving human neocortex, each feeding the other in a positive feedback system that became our species' survival wager. We evolved as a species that would survive on the basis of consciousness interacting with tools. But it is not just our biology that changes over time. Human work transforms society, our everyday way of life with others, and with that our religious and philosophical ideas change. For Marx, the final product of our human work is ourselves as a working, thinking, still-evolving species.

Marx, like Darwin, is not simply a scientist but also a moralist, one who boldly paints in the dots that reveal the picture of the larger human drama, and

what it implies for our place and action within that drama. And like Darwin, Marx saw this picture energized by struggle. For Darwin, individuals within one species compete with one another for food to survive, and species depending upon the same food supply compete with one another. For Marx, different social classes in history have competed with one another to gain control over the surplus of their common labor. Master against slave, lord against serf, guild master against apprentice and, in our day, capitalist against worker—what the past shows us, Marx said, is that history is "the history of class struggles."[2]

True, looked at in one way the division of labor is the story of an evolving and ever more complex form of human cooperation. Marx understood that and called it "the social powers of production." He was quite willing to admit that capitalism had energized a veritable explosion of productive capacity. Still, this cooperation in the division of labor is time and again co-opted to serve the interests of the privileged class. Everything is drawn by power into this politics of class domination. Indeed, consciousness itself—our ideas about the world, about the good and the beautiful, our hopes and dreams and envies and fears—all are drawn into the class struggle, but secretly, and without our noticing it. Marx called this "false consciousness," when class inequalities come to be seen as the intention of the gods, or the legacy of karma, or, more recently, the result of alleged individual merit. About these ideas that justify power and privilege, Marx said, "The ruling ideas of an era are ever the ideas of its ruling class."[3] Ideas have the power to rule, and they do so with more subtlety, and therefore with more effectiveness, than guns.

But we must keep these insights in their proper order. For Marx the tool symbolizes first and above all else *vast human collaboration over time.* The unfolding human story is the story, yes, of struggle, but even more it is the story of gifts passed down, refined, and made more elaborate through the generations. It is the legacy of human work embedded in tools. Take the example of human hammering devices. The earliest were most likely a stone and a stick. Each had its advantages. The stone would not break when striking something solid like wood. And the stick would add length and therefore torque to the human arm. For hundreds of thousands of years the stick and the stone were all we had, but then came a moment of tremendous creativity. With the invention of the stone ax we combined the advantages of both pounding devices.

Or take another example, the history of magnification. The earliest magnifying tool was probably a stone that had been accidentally heated by a fire, which altered its internal organization. Undoubtedly it became an object of religious worship because it carried powerful mysteries within it. It could transform sun into fire. As the story of magnification continued, after thousands of

generations our predecessors at the great workbench of humanity would discover the art of glass-making, of grinding and of making lenses. And not long after that they would put one lens in front of another, and still another . . . and produce the telescope.

This new tool, the telescope, brought us miracles we did not find at all comforting. Forced by the Catholic Church to recant his hypothesis about Earth moving around the Sun, Galileo muttered under his breath, "nevertheless it moves." And three hundred years later—a mere tick of the clock as human evolution counts time—the large optical telescopes of the 1930s and 1940s would show us that many of the stars (suns) of our Milky Way were not stars in our galaxy at all but were instead galaxies of their own, each with its millions of suns. And with that we had to start to rewrite all our cosmologies, all our stories of creation, all our religious ideas about the place of humans in the universe. The tool called magnification rendered our older myths—the contents of our consciousness—not so much wrong as no longer able to guide us. It was not, as the newspapers announced at the time, that man had "conquered space," but that space (in its immensity!) had invaded and (pre)occupied our human mind. Today, we have seen our small and fragile planet—our species' home—from the perspective of the moon. And suddenly the moral prescriptions that have guided human behavior—prescriptions about domination and power and ever-expanding growth—are rendered obsolete, and even dangerous.

What we have pictured to us here is the vision of Karl Marx, the humanist, in dialogue with that other great storyteller of his time, Charles Darwin. Like the Hebrew prophets before him, Marx was driven by a passion for truth and for justice. And justice could not be confined to distributive justice or to the established practices of law ("procedural justice"). The question of justice was lodged in and had to address our species being, our fundamental way of life. It had to address, in short, the organization and control of human labor. In his quest for justice Marx discovered that the master tool of the modern world was money. The human tool called money had come to organize the interaction of all other tools and the social relations of the division of labor.

Beginning three hundred years ago with people like John Locke and Adam Smith a new vision came to possess the minds and hearts of the West—or at least the elites of the West. It was the vision of endlessly expanding markets breaking beyond the old limits of face-to-face barter. With money, not only would markets expand to incorporate wider and wider populations and thus hugely diversify the division of human labor, but competition among the producers would force producers to diversify their product line. Now new and undreamed-of satisfactions became possible. The old, one kind of apple would

be replaced by apples for immediate eating, or different apples for winter storing, or still different apples to cook in pies or to make applesauce. The picture of human desires, of possible human satisfactions began to expand under what seemed a limitless horizon. Today, we call this the Capitalist Revolution.

In our day this revolution has reached the farthest corners of the earth. The tool of money has produced the miracle of the new global market and the ubiquitous shopping mall. Read *The Communist Manifesto,* written more than one hundred and fifty years ago, and you will discover that Marx foresaw it all. And his criticism of what he foresaw in that document, which was even more forcefully inscribed in his essay on *Estranged Labor,* should lead us to serious reflections upon how we conceive of human work in the twenty-first century. According to Marx, when people no longer control their tools, they no longer control their own destiny. When we collectively let our tools be organized by the logic of global financial markets, we have let an alien "god" take over our continuing human journey. And that journey is the journey of human work, the final product of which is our own still-evolving species.

Like the Hebrew prophets of old, Marx knew that to speak of social justice we must become socially self-critical, and that means becoming critical of the ruling powers—whether they be kings or priests or investment bankers. Power and privilege in society always disguise their own arbitrariness behind the facade of fair play, which may be called providence or karma or standardized test scores. Whatever basis is used to claim an objective and unbiased perspective, such claims need critical analysis and challenge. For Marx, all ideas are relative to the social location and interests of their production. And like the prophets before him, the most revealing perspective is not from the top down or from the center outward, but the view of "the widow and the orphan"—the point of view of the exploited and the marginalized. Suffering can see through and unveil official explanations; it can cry out and protest against the arrogance of power.

And this brings us to how Marx viewed religion. When we think about Marx and religion the first thing that comes to mind is his famous statement, "Religion is the opiate of the masses." That is, we tend of think that Marx had a monolithically negative view of religion. But that is not the case. Immediately preceding this language of the "opiate" we find the following: "Religious suffering is at one and the same time the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions."[4] Here Marx recognizes in religion an active moral agency, especially for the deprived and despised. Religion is not simply the ideological expression of the powerful, legitimating the social hierarchy—as in the case, for example, of singing hymns

with the hidden message that as there is a "King in Heaven" so there shall and should be kings on earth. No, for Marx in the hands and voices of the poor and exploited religion is "protest": It is a crying out against "real suffering," not illusory sufferings such as fear of punishment from the gods or sufferings caused by some "impurity" inherited from a previous incarnation.

The most important reflections of Marx on religion are found in his struggle to understand the nature and origin of human self-awareness. In that struggle his primary dialogue partner is the philosopher Hegel. Marx claims that he found Hegel standing on his head and corrected Hegel's idealist philosophy by putting him back on his feet, using a materialist critique. In a remarkable quotation, Marx puts together the ideas of "consciousness," "sensuousness," and "suffering." Here is what he said:

> Imagine a being which is neither an object itself nor has an object. In the first place, such a being would be the *only* being; no other being would exist outside it, it would exist in a condition of solitude. For as soon as there are objects outside me, as soon as I am not *alone*, I am *another*, a reality *other* than the object outside me. For this third object I am therefore a *reality* other than it, i.e. *its* object. A being which is not the object of another being therefore presupposes that *no* objective being exists. As soon as I have an object, this object has me for its object. But a non-objective being is an unreal, non-sensuous, merely thought, i.e. merely conceived being, a being of abstraction. To be *sensuous*, i.e. to be real, is to be an object of sense, a *sensuous* object, and thus to have sensuous objects outside oneself, objects of one's sense perception. To be sensuous is to *suffer* (to be subjected to the actions of another).[5]

Marx is arguing against Hegel here. Consciousness or self-awareness requires the material world as the *over against* ("the object") in relationship to which we become, in effect, a perspective thrown back upon our own perspective. Such self-awareness is always a sensuous relationship, not a mere abstraction. It is a tactile relationship responding to the concrete material world. That is not an easy intimacy, however. It involves suffering and struggling because consciousness, in opposing itself to the givenness of the world, opposes itself to what seems the finality and inevitability of that world. It reaches out from the already in passionate longing for the not yet. Marx goes on:

> Man as an objective sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being, and because he feels his suffering [*Leiden*], he is a *passionate* [*leidenschaftliches*] being. Passion is man's essential power vigorously striving to attain its object.[6]

What Marx objected to in Hegel was Hegel's idealism: Man is most himself when involved in the activity of *critical consciousness*—consciousness that has returned to itself from any external action and come to rest within itself

as a critical perspective upon its own action. It's a kind of aristocracy of separation and distance. For Marx, this was not only elitist, it was a denial of the sensuous, active and therefore *real* human being. For the real human being is not thought but *praxis*—thought engaging itself by engaging its activity in the world. If that seems abstract think of the tool and the thumb, and how it was only in relation to those that we evolved the higher brain or neocortex. The minded creature is not some lonely abstraction squatting outside the world, calculating its self-interests or admiring its critical sophistication. Marx sees humans as fundamentally embodied, not as a spirit trapped in a body. Indeed, for Marx, we are a body *inside of* another body.

One of the more fascinating aspects of the grasp Marx had on our life as sensuous beings is his understanding of our relationship to nature. It is part of his understanding of human reality that opens his thoughts to a radical perspective on the environmental question. Marx did not explore these issues because at the end of the nineteenth century they had not yet become evident. Like others, Marx thought of nature as able to support an indeterminate amount of growth in human productive activity. Today, we know that is not true—although we have yet to discipline our activity to that reality. Nevertheless, as the following quotation makes clear, Marx understood that nature is our second body, and that we live only by staying in constant touch with that larger body:

> Nature is man's *inorganic body*, that is to say nature in so far as it is not the human body. Man *lives* from nature, i.e. nature is his *body*, and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die. To say that man's physical and mental life is linked to nature simply means that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature.[7]

Notice that word "dialogue." It is our species' specific way of being in, with, and of nature. We are *conscious* in our life activity, involved in a conversation, and in that sense enjoy (and also are responsible for) a freedom that other animals in their life activity do not have. Marx put it this way:

> The animal is immediately one with its life activity, not distinct from it. The animal is *its life activity*. Man makes his life activity itself into an object of will and consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he immediately identifies. . . . Only on that account is his activity free activity. Alienated labor reverses the relationship in that man, since he is a conscious being, makes his activity, his essence, *only a means* for his existence.[8]

We all have two bodies—although many of us think we have only one, our inside-the-skin body. We hold onto that body, sometimes quite desperately, because it seems to offer us our only hold on life. Our inside-the-skin

body distinguishes and separates us. It makes us humans and not fish. It makes us male or female, black or white or in between. It locates us as members of this nation and not another one. It makes us here and not there, now and not then. It borders us (and concerning these boundaries innumerable wars have been fought).

But each of us has another body, and it is a body we all share. It is even more crucial to our life than our private or individual body. It is our outside-the-skin body from which, as Marx saw, we constantly draw our life. We breathe; we take in food and water. We see; we smell; we touch and taste and feel. Indeed, we are very much like the amoeba: We are engaged in a constant process of osmosis, a passing back and forth between our inside and our outside.

In our unique species' freedom we have become unfree. Today most of us work because that is how we "make a living." For Marx that is an expression of alienated work. Work, the way we evolve ourselves as an unfinished species, has been reduced to a mere means of our individual survival. Instead, "The object of labor is the *objectification of man's species life*: he produces himself not only intellectually, as in consciousness, but also actively in a real sense and *contemplates himself in a world he has made.*"[9]

It is a striking phrase, to contemplate ourselves in a world we have made. Culture is a product of human labor, and culture is the master tool by which we put ourselves in touch not just with each other but also in dialogue with nature. Culture, as an unfinished product of our work, is our extended body that inserts us into the body of nature in culturally specific ways. It is important to see ourselves in this activity and not be swallowed as if embedded in some finished reality or inevitability. As a species living in the already, we are directed toward the not yet. And this issue of transcendence and freedom returns us once again to the question of religion.

Remember, for Marx the essence of religion is its voicing of "suffering"—its crying out against the realities of exploitation and degradation. And as we have just seen, the essence of being human is a passionate suffering, a struggle to take back into our hands a world we have made but which is then taken away from us. Why then, since our species' life is precisely one of suffering, does Marx in the end reject religion? Because, as he said, "The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for their *real* happiness. To call them to give up their illusions about their conditions is to *call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions.* The criticism of religion is therefore in *embryo* the criticism *of that vale of tears* of which religion is the *halo.*"[10]

This conclusion, I think, reflects the religious practices Marx knew and saw around him—the practices of state religion, Lutheranism in Germany and the Church of England in Great Britain. Had Marx experienced the religious practices, say, of the African-American slaves in the United States he might have come to a less one-sided conclusion. Let us consider one of the "songs of suffering" sung by slaves working in the cotton and tobacco fields of the Old South. One such song, "I Got Shoes, You Got Shoes," goes, "I got shoes / you got shoes / all God's children got shoes. / And when we get to heaven we'll walk all over God's heaven, heaven, heaven / when we get to heaven we'll walk all over God's heaven." What is the function of "heaven-talk" and "God-talk" in slaves giving voice to their sufferings? Is it simply pie-in-the-sky bye-and-bye talk that gives comfort to those who own and enjoy the pie here on earth?

Certainly that is how the slave owners heard it. They didn't hear the subversive voice in that singing. They couldn't, for it would have called into profound moral criticism their own behavior!

In their singing, as they worked barefoot in the fields of the master, the slaves gave collective voice to their protest and the cry of their own deservedness. *Heaven* is another way of talking about "how it will be when things are the way they should be." And in heaven slaves will have shoes. The word *God* is the way the slaves assured each other, under objective circumstances of daily life that seemed to prove just the opposite, that *Heaven* is the *really real*, and that someday it will be. Because Marx had not seen and did not know of such religious practices, he concluded in the only way he could: "The more of himself man gives to God the less he has left in himself."[11] But for the African-American slaves, the transcendent vision of religion helped them subvert all that was so powerfully trying to subvert their own human dignity. It was the cry of protest and the promise of a different future.

That future arrived in the 1960s when a great firestorm of protest broke out across the South. That storm of protest brought down the walls of legalized segregation and the denial of the vote to black citizens of the United States—and with it the whole way of life called "Jim Crow." At the very heart of that rebellion was the black church. And collaborating with them in forcing a change of federal laws in Washington was the white church (both Protestant and Catholic) and Jewish synagogue councils. It was a coalition unforeseen by Karl Marx, but even more, it was beyond his ability to conceive. Also beyond his capacity to conceptualize was the important interaction between Marxist social analysis and Latin American liberation theology. Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s progressive clergy and theologians, seeking to stand in solidarity with the impoverished masses of South America, spoke of

the importance of denouncing exploitation and of announcing hope for a radically different future. Liberation ethicists borrowed heavily from Marxist analysis in decoding the rhetoric of developmentalism and insisted that (social) "liberation" and (ultimate) "salvation" constitute a single and unified hope. Here were inheritors of Marx that Marx did not foresee, but they too continue his legacy of criticizing the strategies and self-deceptions of power. They defend the widow and the orphan against the arrogance and indifference of the privileged.

There is ample historical precedence as to why a dialogue would be fruitful between Marx and religion, and the importance in that dialogue of the analysis Marx brings concerning the nature of human work and our estrangement from that experience. We are creatures, Marx claims, who are meant to be *most* at home "when we are at work," but now "feel at home only when we are not at work." Under the conditions of capitalism, "The more the worker exerts himself, the more powerful becomes the alien object world which he fashions against himself, the poorer he and his inner world become, the less there is that belongs to him."[12] In the very activity in which we continue to re-create and transform ourselves as a species, we experience ourselves and act as individual workers trying to make a living. Instead of enjoying the vast legacy of human tools and skills, which are both the footprints that mark our human past and the path leading toward our species' precarious future, workers today compete against each other for jobs, and in doing so always increase the power of capital over against themselves. As Marx writes:

> In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital.[13]

The worker can find work only where capital has decided it can make a profit. Therefore, by working the worker continues to increase the advantage capital has in the class struggle. And once capital is de-linked from the nation state—as has happened in the late 20th century—workers lose even more power.

Marx develops three categories to inscribe and analyze the story of human work: (1) "the means of production," (2) "the relations of production," and (3) "the social powers of production." The *means of production* are not simply factories or machinery, which are only the surface or visible signs of production. Instead, transnational corporations and global financial markets decide where factories will close and where they will open. And these decisions are driven by calculations of (usually short-term) profit. That is why Marx is convinced that only worker ownership and control of the means of production can put human work back into the hands of workers. Even if workers could

find a way to increase their wages, that would only be something temporary; they would remain "only better paid slaves."[14] It was a lesson that organized labor in America unfortunately did not absorb.

The second piece of the puzzle of human work Marx calls *relations of production*—the patterns of social life that are generated by work. Marx argues that in the modern era these relations of production have been reduced to two classes—capitalists and workers. To many this class analysis seems an obvious oversimplification, just as his idea of inevitable class struggle seems outmoded. After all, the revolution that Marx expected at the end of the nineteenth century did not happen. Industrial capitalism was able to produce so effectively that it generated a far larger surplus than Marx anticipated. And workers were able to organize into unions and use the political machinery of representative government to gain an increasing share of this surplus. Indeed, a whole new class appeared. Today, we call it the "middle class."

To my mind that is a misnomer. The way to identify and name a class is to inscribe it in terms of its function and place within the larger division of labor. My preference is "the professional-managerial class."[15] It is a class made up of middle management together with lawyers, doctors, teachers, social workers, and those engaged in media, advertising, and entertainment. What is the function of this new class? Michel Foucault referred to them as "the new disciplinarians." That is, their work is to administer, regularize, supervise, normalize, pacify (and, if unsuccessful, imprison) the working class and poor.

It is hardly a flattering description, and many of us may object. It is a perspective that deserves attention, however, because in the new global economy this professional-managerial class is beginning to shrink. There is simply no longer the surplus available in the older industrial nations, where this class first appeared and developed, to reproduce this class. As a class under assault, it needs to radically rethink its loyalties and solidarities.

This kind of class analysis is almost always missing when scholars talk about what we are talking about here—namely, religion. In the library you will find hundreds of titles listed under "religion and race" or "religion and gender," but very few listed under "religion and social class." Yet, how can we understand trends such as the rise of evangelical churches and the loss of membership by mainline Protestant denominations in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s, or the rise of Pentecostals at the expense of the Roman Catholic Church in South America, or the rise of radical Muslims at the expense of moderate Muslims without doing global class analysis?

Religious scholarship—the work some of us do alongside other members of the professional-managerial class—needs the instruction of Marx. When it comes to how power works and disguises its workings, students of religion

need this master of suspicion. In the twenty-first century, religion promises to be a major historical force for the first time in four hundred years. Everywhere, whether it is the White House or the presidential palace in Indonesia, religious leaders are being called upon for far more than ceremonial dressing. And in places like the Indian subcontinent, religious differences have become the grounds both for war and for domestic political maneuvering.

But how religion *should* deploy its power cannot be understood without a critical analysis of how the new global "means of production" have transformed, and are powerfully transforming, the new global "relations of production." Our most fundamental dependencies—the everyday world we rely upon and take for granted, a world where we feel safe and have a measure of control—are changing dramatically. This poses the question, in whose hands will religion decide to be a tool? To answer that question religion will need to look at what Marx calls the *social powers of production.*

It may come as a surprise that Marx, even more than the ideological defenders of capitalism, deciphered very early the way in which human labor organized by capital would produce a vast and in many respects quite positive increase in human productive capacities. Expanding transport and trade, increasing technologies and advancement in tools, the transformation of rural life by reproducing in the village the values and dreams of metropolitan culture—all of this would change forever the shape of how we humans live. Read the early pages of *The Communist Manifesto.* Marx was no Luddite. He did not want to smash the powers of the new machinery of production but to harness those powers to the interests of the workers.

In a warning still mostly missed by the followers of traditional religions, Marx pointed out that these new "social powers of production" would generate a new culture of consumerism. Increased production would demand an expanded imagination of human needs and satisfactions, an endless cornucopia of "stuff" necessary to make us happy and satisfied. But it is a satisfaction that becomes in the next moment no longer satisfying, and we need more. At the heart of this new culture would be a new ethos—a new code of behavior and respect, new patterns of hope and envy, of self-esteem and despair. "The bourgeoisie," Marx wrote, "has played a most revolutionary role in history."[16] It has transformed the terms of human respect:

> The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand . . . has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors," and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." . . . It has resolved personal worth into exchange value . . . [It] has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the men of science, into its paid wage laborers.[17]

The physician, lawyer, priest, poet and scientist—for whom do such folks now work? And what is the purpose of their work? And on what grounds do they ask the rest of us to honor them? More than 150 years ago Marx argued that global capitalism was producing a new culture, a culture that defines all value, including the value of persons, in terms of the value assigned by the market. Said directly, what Marx announced and denounced was the radical assault on the values long cherished by world religions—the intrinsic value and dignity of the human person. But his warning was not heard.

Twice before an anthology of the writings of Karl Marx on religion has been published in North America. They appeared ten years apart, in 1964 and 1974. They are *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on Religion* (Schocken Books, 1964), with an introduction by Reinhold Neibuhr, and *On Religion: Karl Marx* (McGraw-Hill, 1974), edited by Saul K. Padover. Padover slants his selections toward the question of anti-Semitism in Marx. My interests are quite different. Neibuhr, who was my teacher, was mostly critical of Marx, accusing him of an unrealistic utopianism that a better grasp of the Christian doctrine of sin could have corrected. In contrast to that position, it is my judgment that Marx is less a poorly informed critic of religion than an important friend and dialogue partner. In this new century the values Marx fought for in terms of the dignity and destiny of human work may find their most effective advocate in world religions. But if world religions are to take up that task, they will have to undergo a fundamental self-examination. When confronted by the crisis caused by continuing world poverty compounded by environmental limits to endless economic growth, religion may be tempted to retreat into enclaves of otherworldly hope. If so, then Marx will have been proved correct in his judgment that religion suffers from an irremediable "inverted consciousness"—a consciousness that looks upon the world but sees it upside down. On the other hand, evidence from Christian liberation theology and from liberation theologies being developed by Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist scholars and activists indicates a movement toward positive engagement. Only time will tell whether world religions can come home to planet Earth—a place that may or may not have been given birth by the gods, but most assuredly gave birth to a creature which, time and again and in all its varied ways, poses to itself the question of God.

Notes

1. See *Dialectics of Nature* (1873).
2. *The Communist Manifesto*, chapter 1, p. 144.
3. Ibid., chapter 3 (not included in this book).

4. "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," p. 171.
5. "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy," p. 84; emphasis in the original.
6. Ibid.
7. "Estranged Labor," p. 122; emphasis in the original.
8. Ibid., p. 123; emphasis in the original.
9. Ibid., p. 123; emphasis in original.
10. "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," p. 171.
11. "Estranged Labor," p. 119.
12. Ibid.
13. *The Communist Manifesto,* chapter 1, p. 149.
14. *The Communist Manifesto,* chapter 2 (not included).
15. See the essay by Barbara and John Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," in *Between Labor and Capital,* edited by Pat Walker (1973).
16. *The Communist Manifesto,* chapter 1, p. 146.
17. Ibid., p. 146.

PART I

The Young Man Marx

Marx was descended from famous rabbis on both sides of his family going back to at least the fifteenth century. And records show that in Trier, the town where Marx was born in 1818, almost all the rabbis of the past had been his paternal kin. His father's brother was a rabbi there and Karl became a boyhood friend of the rabbi's son. Marx's own father, Heschel, a lawyer, had converted to Christianity a few months before Karl was born—but only under extreme pressure. With the French defeat in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, Trier was returned to Prussian control. At thirty-eight years of age, with a wife and child to support, Heschel Marx was faced with the decision under Prussian law either to renounce his ancestral religion or to give up his career as a lawyer. Heschel, supported by several leading Christian lawyers, appealed to Berlin for special dispensation. The appeal was denied, and Heschel was baptized a Lutheran sometime in 1817. But Henriette Marx, Karl's mother, refused conversion until late in her life, after all eight of her children had long since been baptized as Christians.

It was, you would think, a memory of humiliation that would have imprinted the young Marx with a bias against the church rather than against the synagogue, but that was not to be the case. Instead, Marx attended the local Protestant Volksschule *in a town that was 90 percent Roman Catholic, and as a minority became an*

enthusiastic student of Evangelical theology from which he learned to think of "the Jew" as an abstract category representing greed and material preoccupation. It was a point of view that Marx was not to relinquish when, in his university days and studying philosophy, he renounced his Christian religion and proclaimed himself an atheist.

His first interest at the University of Bonn had been in Romantic poetry. But by the time he transferred to the University of Berlin in 1837 he wrote in a letter to his father that his interest had turned from poetry to philosophy. Marx joined the Berlin Doctors Club[1] and confessed to his father that he had passed from Kant and Fichte "into the clutches" of Hegel. Earlier, while in Bonn, he had met and fallen in love with Jenny von Westphalen, who returned the favor. They would marry and enjoy a close and lifelong relationship. Late in his life, Marx wrote to Jenny: "There are actually many females in the world, and some among them are beautiful. But where could I find again a face whose every feature, even every wrinkle, is a reminder of the greatest and sweetest memories of my life."[2] And this he wrote in spite of their years of exile and poverty.

Having publicly associated himself with the cause of the Prussian working class, Marx effectively ended any possibility of academic employment. He became a journalist and by 1843, because of his public views on politics and Prussian state religion, found himself exiled from Germany to Paris where he met the man who would become his permanent friend and supporter, Friedrich Engels. The two discovered that they shared a passion for Feuerbach and his criticism not only of Christianity but of the philosophical idealism of Hegel.

I have selected for this first section several writings from the young man Marx that reflect his warm personality and his early enthusiasm for social justice. Included also are writings that evidence a growing disenchantment with Christianity and religion in general in favor of critical philosophy and active advocacy for what Marx called "the impoverished, the socially and politically deprived masses."[3] If the first turn against religion was practical and moral, Marx developed a theoretical criticism under the influence of Feuerbach (see Parts II and IV). I have included here as well his essay "On the Jewish Question" which displays simultaneously and ironically an unfortunate stereotyping of Judaism as a religion even as it argues that the reformation of society must look beyond all religions. For Marx emancipatory practices require emancipation not from a particular religion but from religion in general. He came to this conclusion because the state religion that he saw and experienced had not simply abandoned the poor and working classes but had become an ideological weapon of the ruling class in Germany and in England. It was the only religion Marx would ever know.

Notes

1. The Doctors Club at the University of Berlin was a group of "Young Hegelians" concerned with showing that the true basis of Christianity is to be found in historical experience and ultimately in man's social needs.
2. Cited in the *New York Times Magazine*, Feb. 13, 1994.
3. *The Communist Manifesto*, chapter 2 (not included in this book).

"REFLECTIONS OF A YOUTH ON CHOOSING AN OCCUPATION" (1835)

This is Marx's answer to an examination question required for graduation from the Gymnasium *at Trier. It displays a youthful enthusiasm for a life of scholarship but hints at social constraints that impose themselves upon our life choices. How these "social relations" are constructed will become a major theme in his mature writings.*

Nature has assigned to the animal the sphere of its activity, and the animal acts calmly within it, not striving beyond, not even surmising that there is another. To man, too, the Deity gave a general goal, to improve mankind and himself, but left it up to him to seek the means by which he can attain this goal, left it up to him to choose the position in society which is most appropriate and from which he can best elevate both himself and society.

This choice is a great privilege over other creatures but at the same time an act which can destroy man's entire life, defeat all his plans, and make him unhappy. Hence, a youth who is beginning a career and who does not wish to leave his most important concerns to chance certainly sees his foremost duty in considering this choice seriously.

Everyone has a goal which appears to be great, at least to himself, and [it] is great when deepest conviction, the innermost voice of the heart, pronounces it great; for the Deity never leaves man entirely without a guide; the Deity speaks softly, but with certainty.

This voice, however, is easily drowned out, and what we thought to be inspiration may have been created by the fleeting moment and again perhaps destroyed by it. Perhaps our fantasy is inflamed, our emotions excited; phantoms move before our eyes, and eagerly we rush to the goal, believing that the Deity pointed it out to us. But what we ardently pressed to our breast soon repels us, and we see our whole existence destroyed.

We must seriously ask ourselves, therefore, whether we are really inspired about a vocation, whether an inner voice approves of it, or whether the inspiration was a deception, whether that which we took as the Deity's calling to us was self-deceit. But how else could we recognize this except by searching for the source of our inspiration?

Everything great glitters, glitter begets ambition, and ambition can easily have caused the inspiration or what we thought to be inspiration. But reason can no longer restrain one who is lured by the fury of ambition. He tumbles where his vehement drive calls him; no longer does he choose his position, but rather chance and luster determine it.

Then we are not called to the position where we can most shine. It is not the one which, in the long succession of years during which we may hold it, will never make us weary, subdue our zeal, or dampen our inspiration. Soon we shall see our wishes unfulfilled and our ideas unsatisfied. We shall have a grievance against the Deity and curse humanity.

But not only ambition can cause a sudden inspiration about a position; we may have embellished it with our fantasies, embellished it to the highest point that life can offer. We have not analyzed it, not considered the entire burden and great responsibility to be placed upon us. We have regarded it only from a distance, and distance deceives.

In this matter our own reason cannot be the counselor. Neither experience nor profound observation supports our reason, which is deceived by emotion and blinded by fantasy. But where shall we look for support when our reason leaves us in the lurch?

Our heart calls upon our parents who have walked the path of life, have experienced fate's severity.

And if our inspiration still endures, if we still love that position and believe we are called to it after we have tested it objectively, perceived its burden, and become acquainted with its encumbrances—then we may strive for it, then inspiration does not deceive us, nor does overeagerness rush us.

But we cannot always choose the vocation to which we believe we are called. Our social relations, to some extent, have already begun to form before we are in a position to determine them.

Even our physical nature often threateningly opposes us, and no one dare mock its rights!

To be sure, we can lift ourselves above it, but then we fall all the faster. We then venture to construct a building on rotten foundations, and our entire life is an unfortunate struggle between the intellectual and the physical principle. When one cannot calm the elements fighting in himself, how can he

stand up against life's tempestuous urge, how is he to act calmly? Out of calmness alone can great and beautiful deeds emerge. Calmness is the only soil on which ripe fruits thrive.

Although we cannot work for long, and seldom joyfully, with a physical nature inappropriate to our position, the thought of sacrificing our welfare to duty, of acting with weakness, yet with strength, always arises. However, if we have chosen a position for which we do not possess the talents, we shall never be able to fill it properly, we shall soon recognize with shame our own incapability and say to ourselves that we are a useless creature, a member of society who cannot fill his post. The most natural result then, is self-contempt, and what feeling is more painful, what can less be displaced by anything the external world offers? Self-contempt is a serpent which eternally gnaws in one's breast, sucks out the heart's lifeblood, and mixes it with the poison of misanthropy and despair.

A deception about our aptitude for a position we have examined closely is a misdeed which revengefully falls back on ourselves, and even though it may not be censured by the external world, provokes in our breast a pain more terrible than the external world can cause.

When we have weighed everything, and when our relations in life permit us to choose any given position, we may take that one which guarantees us the greatest dignity, which is based on ideas of whose truth we are completely convinced, which offers the largest field to work for mankind and approach the universal goal for which every position is only a means: perfection.

Dignity elevates man most, bestows a high nobleness to all his acts, all his endeavors, and permits him to stand irreproachable, admired by the crowd and above it.

Only that position can impart dignity in which we do not appear as servile tools but rather create independently within our circle. Only that position can impart dignity which requires no reproachable acts, reproachable not even in appearance—a position which the best person can undertake with noble pride. The position which guaranteed this the most is not always the highest, but it is always the best.

Just as a position without dignity lowers us, we certainly succumb to the burden of one based on ideas we later recognize as false.

Then we see no aid except in self-deception, and what a desperate rescue is the one that guarantees self-betrayal.

The vocations which do not take hold of life but death rather, with abstract truths are the most dangerous for the youth whose principles are not yet crystallized, whose conviction is not yet firm and unshakable, though at the same time they seem to be the most lofty ones when they have taken root deep in

the breast and when we can sacrifice life and all striving for the ideas which hold sway in them.

They can make him happy who is called to them; but they destroy him who takes them overhurriedly, without reflection, obeying the moment.

But the high opinion we have of the ideas on which our vocation is based bestows on us a higher standpoint in society, enlarges our own dignity, makes our actions unwavering.

Whoever chooses a vocation which he esteems highly will carefully avoid making himself unworthy of it; therefore, he will act nobly because his position in society is noble.

The main principle, however, which must guide us in the selection of a vocation is the welfare of humanity, our own perfection. One should not think that these two interests combat each other, that the one must destroy the other. Rather, man's nature makes it possible for him to reach his fulfillment only by working for the perfection and welfare of his society.

If a person works only for himself he can perhaps be a famous scholar, a great wise man, a distinguished poet, but never a complete, genuinely great man.

History calls those the greatest men who ennobled themselves by working for the universal. Experience praises as the most happy the one who made the most people happy. Religion itself teaches us that the ideal for which we are all striving sacrificed itself for humanity, and who would dare to destroy such a statement?

When we have chosen the vocation in which we can contribute most to humanity, burdens cannot bend us because they are only sacrifices for all. Then we experience no meager, limited, egotistic joy, but our happiness belongs to millions, our deeds live on quietly but eternally effective, and glowing tears of noble men will fall on our ashes.

LETTER TO HIS FATHER: ON A TURNING-POINT IN LIFE (1837)

After two years at the University of Bonn, Marx transferred to Berlin, where he quickly left behind his earlier interest in Romantic poetry. He became grasped by the more sober reflections of Hegel who had once said of Kant's categorical imperative about treating persons as ends and not means, "What does that have to do with the Norman conquest of England?" Increasingly, Marx studied power and how power works. The letter also displays Marx's warm relationship with his father and discloses his love for Jenny von Westphalen.

Berlin, November 10

Dear Father,

There are moments in life which mark the close of a period like boundary posts and at the same time definitely point in a new direction.

At such a point of transition, we feel compelled to contemplate the past and the present with the eagle eye of thought to become aware of our actual position. Indeed, world history itself loves such a retrospect, and reflects upon itself, often producing the semblance of a retrogression or standstill, while in reality it has merely eased itself back in an armchair to comprehend itself and penetrate intellectually its own act, the act of the mind.

In such moments, however, the individual becomes lyrical, for every transformation is to some extent a swan song, to some extent the overture to a great new poem, which strives to gain shape in tints still blurred but brilliant. Yet, we should like to erect a memorial to what already has been experienced so it may regain in sentiment the place which it lost in the world of action; and where could we find a holier site than in the heart of our parents, the most clement judge, the most ardent participator, the sun of love, whose fire warms the innermost center of our endeavors! How could much that is objectionable and blameworthy better find compensation and pardon than by becoming manifestation of an essentially necessary condition? How, at any rate, could the often hostile turn of chance and aberration of the spirit escape the reproach of being due to a twisted heart?

When, therefore, at the close of a year here, I now glance back upon what has happened and in this way, dear Father, answer your very affectionate letter from Ems, allow me to contemplate my circumstances, how I regard life in general as the expression of reflection taking shape in all directions—in science, art, private matters.

When I left you, a new world had just opened for me, the world of love, at first a love that was frenzied with yearning and void of hope. Even the journey to Berlin, which otherwise would have extremely delighted me, would have incited me to contemplate nature, would have inflamed me with the joy of living, left me cold. It even depressed me profoundly, for the rocks I saw were no rougher, no harsher, than the feelings of my soul; the big cities were not more lively than my blood; the tables in the inns were not more overladen, the food not more indigestible than were the contents of my imagination; and, to conclude, art was not so beautiful as Jenny.

Having arrived in Berlin, I broke all existing ties, reluctantly made very few visits, and sought to immerse myself in science and art.

In my state of mind at that time, lyrical poetry inevitably had to be my first concern, at any rate the most agreeable and most obvious; but, in accord

with my position and whole previous development, it was purely idealistic. A remote beyond, such as my love, became my heaven, my art. Everything real grew vague, and all that is vague lacks boundaries. Onslaughts against the present, broad and shapeless expressions of unnatural feeling, constructed purely out of the blue, the complete opposition of what is and what ought to be, rhetorical reflections instead of poetic thoughts but perhaps also a certain warmth of sentiment and a struggle for movement characterize all the poems in the first three volumes I sent to Jenny. The whole horizon of a longing which sees no frontiers assumed many forms and frustrated my effort to write with poetic conciseness.

But poetry could only be, should only be, a companion. I had to study jurisprudence, and above all I felt an urge to wrestle with philosophy. The two were so closely connected that I read Heineccius, Thibaut, and the sources in schoolboy fashion, quite uncritically. I translated, for instance, the first two books of the Pandects into German, but I also tried, in studying law, to work out a philosophy of law. I prefixed, as introduction, some metaphysical propositions and developed this ill-starred opus as far as the topic of public law—a work of nearly three hundred pages.

Particularly here I was greatly disturbed by the conflict between what is and what ought to be, a conflict peculiar to idealism, and this gave rise to the following hopelessly inaccurate classification. First of all, what I gratuitously christened "metaphysics of law"—that is, principles, reflections, determinative concepts—was severed from all actual law and from any actual form of law as in the writings of Fichte, only in my case in a more modern and less substantial fashion. Furthermore, the unscientific form of mathematical dogmatism—where the subject wanders about the topic, argues hither and thither, while the topic itself is never formulated as something rich in content, something alive—was from the first a hindrance to the comprehension of the truth.

The nature of the triangle induces the mathematician to construct it, demonstrate its properties, but it remains a mere idea in space and undergoes no further development. We must put the triangle beside another form. Then it assumes different positions, and the other form with its various relative positions endows the triangle with different relations and truths. On the other hand, in the concrete expression of the living world of thought—as in law, the state, nature, philosophy as a whole—the object itself must be studied in its development; there must be no arbitrary classifications; the rationale of the thing itself must be disclosed in all its contradictoriness and find its unity in itself.

As a second part there followed the philosophy of law, that is, as I then saw the matter, the study of the development of ideas in positive Roman law, as if positive law in the development of its ideas (I do not mean in its purely

finite determinations) could be anything different from the formulation of the concept of law which the first part was to include.

On top of this I had divided this part into a formal and a material doctrine of law. The former was to describe the pure form of the system in its succession and interaction, the classification and the scope; the latter, on the other hand, the content, the condensation of the form in its content. This was an error which I share with Herr von Savigny, as I was to find out later when reading his scholarly work on possession, but with the difference that he speaks of formal determinate concepts as "finding the place which this or that doctrine occupies in the suppositional Roman system" and of material determinate concepts as "the doctrine of positivity which the Romans ascribe to a concept established this way," whereas I understood by form the necessary architectonic of the formulations of the concept and by matter the necessary quality of these formulations. My mistake was that I believed one could and must develop the one apart from the other, with the result that I achieved no genuine form but a desk with a number of drawers I subsequently littered with sand.

The concept is, after all, the intermediary between form and content. In a philosophical disquisition on law, therefore, the one must arise out of the other because form can only be the continuation of content. Thus I finally did arrive at a classification, though the subject lends itself at most to superficial and shallow classification, but the spirit of law and truth had perished. All law was subdivided into covenanted and uncovenanted. I take the liberty of writing down the schema, with the exception of the *ius publicum* which is also dealt with in the formal part, to acquaint you with it better.

I
Ius privatum

II
Ius publicum

I *Ius privatum*

A. About conditional covenanted private law
B. About conditional uncovenanted law

A. *About conditional covenanted private law: a)* Personal law; *b)* Property law; *c)* Personal property law.

a) Personal law

I. On the basis of encumbered contract; II. on the basis of secured contract; III. on the basis of open contract.

I. *On the basis of encumbered contract.*

2. Contract of agreement (societas); 3. *Contract of service* (locatio conductio)

3. Locatio conductio

1. As referring to operae
   a) Actual locatio conductio (I mean neither the Roman renting nor leasing);
   b) *mandatum*
2. As referring to usus rei
   a) As to land: *usus fructus* (again not in the merely Roman meaning);
   b) As to buildings: *habitatio*

II. *On the basis of secured contract.*

1. Arbitration or mediation contract. 2. Securance contract.

III. *On the basis of open contract.*

2. *Contract by consent*

1. fide iussio; 2. negotiorum gestio

3. *Deed*

1. donatio; 2. gratiae promissum

b) Property law

I. *On the basis of encumbered contract.*

2. permutatio stricte sic dicta.
1. Actual permutatio; 2. mutuum (usurae); 3. *emptio, venditio*

II. *On the basis of secured contract.* pignus.

III. *On the basis of open contract.*

2. commodatum; 3. depositum.

But why should I continue filling pages with things I have discarded? The whole is permeated with trichotomous classifications, penned with wearisome prolixity. I misused the Roman notions most barbarously in order to force them into my system. Still, to some extent at least, I gained a conspectus of my topic and an affection for it.

At the close of the discussion of material private law, I saw the fallaciousness of the whole, which in its fundamental schema borders on the Kantian, though differing wholly from Kant in matters of detail. Once more I realized that I could not make my way without philosophy. Hence, I was again able, with good conscience, to throw myself into the arms of philosophy, and I

wrote a new basic metaphysical system. Upon its completion I was again constrained to recognize its futility and that of all my previous endeavors.

Meanwhile I had acquired the habit of making excerpts from all the books I was reading, from Lessing's *Laocoön*, Solger's *Erwin*, Winckelmann's *History of Art*, Luden's *German History*. While doing this, I scribbled down some reflections. At the same time I translated Tacitus' *Germania*, Ovid's *Tristium libri*. With the aid of grammar books I began the private study of English and Italian, but as yet have not achieved anything. I read Klein's book on criminal law and his *Annals*, and a lot of the most recent literature, though the latter only incidentally.

At the end of the semester, I once more sought the dance of the muses and the music of satyrs. Already in the last pages I sent you, idealism plays its part in the form of forced humor ("Skorpion and Felix") and in an unsuccessful dramatic fantasy ("Oulanem"), until at length it takes an entirely different direction and changes into pure formal art, for the most part without any stimulating objects and without any lively movement of ideas.

Nevertheless, these last poems are the only ones in which suddenly, as if by the wave of a magician's wand—it was shattering at the beginning—the realm of true poetry flashed open before me like a distant faery palace, and all my creations collapsed into nothing.

During the first semester I was awake many a night, engaged in these multifarious occupations. I went through many struggles and experienced much stimulation from within and without. Yet, in the end, I found that my mind had not been greatly enriched while I had neglected nature, art, and the world, and had alienated my friends. My body apparently reacted. A physician advised a stay in the country, and so for the first time I traversed the whole spread-out town and went through the gate to Stralow. I did not anticipate that I, an anemic weakling, should there ripen into a man with a robust and solid frame.

A curtain had fallen, my holy of holies had been shattered, and new gods had to be found.

Setting out from idealism—which, let me say in passing, I had compared to and nourished with that of Kant and Fichte—I hit upon seeking the Idea in the real itself. If formerly the gods had dwelt above the world, they had now become its center.

I had read fragments of Hegel's philosophy and had found its grotesque, craggy melody unpleasing. I wished to dive into the ocean once again but with the definite intention of discovering our mental nature to be just as determined, concrete, and firmly established as our physical—no longer to practice the art of fencing but to bring pure pearls into the sunlight.

I wrote a dialogue of about twenty-four pages, entitled "Cleanthes, or the Starting Point and the Necessary Progress of Philosophy." Here, in a way, art

and science, which had been severed, were reunited. And now, an energetic wanderer, I set out for the main task, a philosophic-dialectical discussion of the godhead manifested as a concept per se, as religion, as nature, and as history. My last sentence was the beginning of the Hegelian system, and this task—for which I had acquainted myself to some extent with natural science, Schelling, and history, and which (since it was to be a new logic) is written in such a fashion that even I myself now can scarcely make head or tail of it—this darling child of mine, nurtured in moonlight, bears me like a false-hearted siren into the clutches of the enemy.

Because of my vexation, I was for several days quite unable to think. Like a lunatic I ran around in the garden beside the Spree's dirty water "which washes the soul and dilutes tea." I even went out hunting with my host and then returned hotfoot to Berlin, wishing to embrace every loafer at the street corners.

Thereafter I carried on positive studies only: Savigny's study on ownership, [Anselm] Feuerbach's and Grolmann's works on criminal law, Cramer's *De verborum significatione,* Wenning-Ingenheim's pandect system and Mühlenbruch's *Doctrina Pandectarum* (which I am still reading), and finally some of Lauterbach's works, books on civil law and especially on ecclesiastical law. As regards this last, I have read through and made extracts from almost all the first part of Gratian, *Concordia discordantium canonum,* as well as its appendix, and Lancelotti's *Institutiones.* Then I translated part of Aristotle's *Rhetoric,* read *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* of the famous Bacon of Verulam, occupied myself intensively with Reimarus whose work on the mechanical instincts of animals I followed through with delight. Next I came to German law, but mainly concerned myself with the capitularies of the Franconian kings and the letters of the popes to them.

From grief over Jenny's illness and because of the futility of my lost labors, from consuming vexation at having to make an idol of a view I detest, I fell sick, as, my dear Father, I have previously related. Having recovered, I burned all my poems, my sketches for novellas, etc., under the illusion that I could refrain from anything of the kind—and there is as yet no evidence to the contrary.

While out of sorts, I had got to know Hegel from beginning to end, and most of his disciples as well. Through several meetings with friends in Stralow I became a member of a Doctors' Club to which some instructors and my most intimate friend in Berlin, Dr. [Adolf] Rutenberg, belong. In discussions many a conflicting opinion was voiced, and I was more and more chained to the current world philosophy from which I had thought to escape. But all tones were muted and a fit of irony possessed me as was natural after so many negations. Jenny's silence added to this, and I could not rest until I had become up-to-

date and acquired the current scientific view by some poor productions such as *The Visit*.

If I have perhaps failed to explain this last semester clearly to you as a whole and in all its details, if I left its shadings hazy, you will forgive me, dear Father, on account of my eagerness to speak of the present.

Herr [Adalbert] von Chamisso has sent me a piddling note in which he informs me of his "regret that his Almanac can make no use of my contributions, having long since gone to press." I swallowed his note in anger. Wigand, the bookseller, has forwarded my plan to Dr. Schmidt, manager of Wunder's Warehouse of Good Cheese and Bad Literature. I am enclosing Wigand's letter; Schmidt has not answered yet. Meanwhile I have by no means abandoned the plan, all the more since all the aesthetic notables of the Hegelian school have promised to co-operate, induced by Instructor [Bruno] Bauer, who is important among them, and by my coadjutor, Dr. Rutenberg.

As to the question of a career as an official, dear Father, I have recently made the acquaintance of an assistant judge, Schmidthänner by name, who advises me to enter upon this after passing the third of my law examinations. The plan appeals to me, since I really prefer jurisprudence to any study of administration. This gentleman told me that from the Münster provincial court of appeal he and many others had in three years attained the position of assistant judge, which, he says, is not difficult—provided, of course, that one works hard—since in that part of the world the stages are not as they are in Berlin and elsewhere strictly marked out. If, as assistant judge, one obtains the doctorate, there are excellent chances of speedy appointment as professor extraordinary. This is what happened to Herr Gärtner in Bonn after he had written a mediocre book on provincial law-codes, his only other title to fame being that he proclaims himself a member of the Hegelian school of jurists. But, dear Father, best of fathers, can't we talk all this over face to face? Eduard's condition, dear Mother's trouble, your own indisposition—I hope it is nothing serious—all combine to make me want to hurry home without delay. It is virtually imperative that I should. Indeed, I should already be with you, were I not in doubt as to your approval.

Believe me, my dear Father, this is not a selfish wish (though I should be so happy to see Jenny again). I am driven rather by a thought I cannot put into words. Actually in some respects it would be difficult for me to come; but such considerations, as my darling Jenny writes, all give way to the fulfillment of sacred duties.

I beg you, dear Father, whatever you may decide, not to show this letter—or at any rate this page of it—to Mother. My unexpected arrival may perhaps cheer the great, magnificent woman.

My letter to her was written long before Jenny's dear letter arrived, so I may unwittingly have written too much about unsuitable matters.

In the hope that the clouds which hang over our family will gradually disperse; that I shall be permitted to share your sufferings and mingle my tears with yours, and perhaps in your presence show the deep affection, the immeasurable love, which I often have not been able to express as I should like; in the hope that you too, dear and eternally beloved Father, mindful of my storm-tossed feelings, will forgive me when my heart must often have seemed to have gone astray as the burdens of my spirit stifled it; in the hope that you will soon be fully restored to health and I shall be able to clasp you in my arms to tell you all I feel,

I remain always your loving son,

Karl.

Forgive the illegible handwriting and defective style, dear Father. It is nearly four o'clock, the candle has burned out, and my eyes are clouded. Restlessness has overwhelmed me. I shall not be able to lay the specters haunting me until I am in your dear presence.

Please give my best love to my sweet Jenny. I have already read her letter a dozen times, finding new charms in it each time. In every respect, style included, it is the most beautiful letter I can imagine a woman writing.

THE LEADING ARTICLE OF NO. 179 OF *KÖLNISCHE ZEITUNG*

Writing in the Rheinische Zeitung *in 1842, Marx criticizes those who hold that religious vitality is the heart of a strong culture and argues, instead, for the separation of church and state. He is clearly under the influence of Hegel's philosophy, although he is already using Feuerbach's materialism to criticize Hegel's idealism.*

Hitherto we credited *Kölnische Zeitung* with being, if not the "paper of Rhineland intellectuals," at least the Rhineland "Advertiser." We saw above all in its political leaders a means, as wise as it was select, of disgusting the reader with politics so that he would turn all the more eagerly to the luxuriant, industriously pulsating and often charmingly witty domain of advertisement, so that here too the motto would be *per aspera ad astra,* through politics to oysters. But the fair proportion that *Kölnische Zeitung* so far man-

aged to maintain between politics and advertisements has been upset of late by what could be called "political industry advertisements." In the initial uncertainty where the new variety should be inserted, it happened that an advert was transformed into a leading article and the leading article into an advert of the kind that is called in political language a denunciation but which, if paid for, is merely called an advertisement.

It is a custom in the north to treat guests to exquisite liqueurs before meager meals. We are all the more willing to follow that custom in regard to our northern guests and give them spirits before the meal, as in the meal itself, the "ailing" article in No. 179 of *Kölnische Zeitung,* we find no spirits at all. So first we treat the reader to a scene from Lucian's *Dialogues of the Gods* in a translation accessible to all, for among our readers there will be at least one who is no Hellene.

LUCIANS'S *DIALOGUES OF THE GODS*

XXIV. COMPLAINTS OF HERMES

Hermes, Maia

Hermes. Is there, dear mother, in the whole heavens, a God more harassed than I?

Maia. Speak not so, my son.

Hermes. Why should I not? I, who have a multitude of affairs to attend to, must always work alone and submit to so many slavish duties. I must rise in the small hours of the morning and clean out the dining hall, arrange the couches in the Council Room, and when everything is in order attend on Jupiter, running errands all day as his messenger. Hardly am I back, covered with dust, when I must serve the ambrosia. And what is most annoying, I am the only one to whom no peace is granted even at night, for then I must escort the souls of the dead to Pluto and act as attendant at their judgment. It is not enough for me to work during the day. I must attend the *gymnastics,* act the *herald* at the assemblies of the people, and help the popular orators to learn their speeches. No, I, who am torn asunder by so many matters, must over and above attend to the *whole business of the dead.*

Since his expulsion from the Olympus Hermes has been going on by force of habit with his "slavish duties" and the whole business of the dead.

Whether it was Hermes himself or his son Pan, the caprine god, who wrote the ailing article in No. 179, we shall leave the reader to decide, remembering that Hermes of the Greeks was the god of eloquence and logic.

"To spread philosophical and religious views by means of the newspapers or to combat them in newspapers seem to us equally inadmissible."

As the old man chattered away it was easy for me to note that he was bent on a tedious litany of oracles, but I calmed my impatience, for why should I not believe the sensible man who is so impartial as to speak out his opinion quite frankly in his own house, and I read on. But lo and behold! This article, which cannot be reproached with a single philosophical view, has at least a tendency to combat philosophical views and spread religious ones.

Of what use to us is an article which disputes its own right to exist, which introduces itself by a declaration of its own incompetence. The loquacious author will answer us. He explains how his bombastic articles are to be read. He confines himself to giving fragments whose "concatenation and interconnection" he leaves to "the ingenuity of his reader" to discover—the most appropriate method for the kind of advertisement that he deals with. So we shall "concatenate and interconnect" and it is not our fault if the rosary does not become a string of pearls.

The author states:

"A party which makes use of these means" (spreading and combating philosophical and religious views in newspapers) "thereby shows, in *our* opinion, that its intentions *are not honorable* and that it is less interested in teaching and enlightening the people than in attaining *ulterior aims.*"

This being *his* opinion, the article can have nothing else in view than the attainment of ulterior aims. These "ulterior aims" will not remain concealed.

The state, the author says, has not only the right but also the duty "to silence *non-professional* praters." He means the *opponents* of his views, for he has long agreed with himself that he is a *professional* prater.

It is a question, therefore, of a further tightening of censorship in religious matters, a new police measure against the press which has hardly begun to breathe freely.

"In our opinion, the state can be reproached with undue forbearance rather than with excessive rigor."

But the author of the leading article thinks better of it: it is dangerous to reproach the state; so he addresses himself to the authorities, his accusation against freedom of the press becomes an accusation against the censors; he accuses the censors of applying too "little censorship."

"A blameworthy forbearance has been shown so far, *not, admittedly, by the state,* but by *`individual authorities,'* in allowing the new philosophical school to permit itself the most unseemly attacks upon Christianity in public papers and other printed works not intended exclusively for scientific readers."

The author pauses again and thinks better of it again: not eight days ago he found that with freedom of censorship there was too little freedom of the press; he now finds that with compulsion of censors there is too little compulsion by the censorship.

That must be set right again.

"As long as censorship exists it is its most urgent duty to cut out such repulsive excrescences of boyish insolence as have repeatedly offended our eyes in recent days."

Weak eyes! Weak eyes! And the "weakest eye will be offended by an expression which can only be intended for the powers of comprehension of the broad masses."

If relaxed censorship allows repulsive excrescences to appear, what can be expected of freedom of the press? If our eyes are too weak to bear the "insolence" [*Übermut*] of what has been censored, how can they be strong enough to bear the "audacity" [*Mut*] of the free press?

"As long as censorship exists it is its most urgent duty to. . . ." And once it no longer exists? The sentence must be interpreted: It is the most urgent duty of the censorship to exist as long as possible.

And again the author thinks better of it:

"It is not our function to act as *public* prosecutor and therefore we refrain from any more precise specification."

What heavenly kindness the man has! He refrains from more precise "specification" whereas only by quite precise, quite distinct signs could he prove and show what *his* view aims at; he utters but vague, half-whispered words of suspicion; it is not his function to act as *public* prosecutor: his function is to be a *concealed accuser.*

For the last time the wretched man thinks better of it: his function is to write liberal leading articles, to play the "loyal supporter of freedom of the press." He therefore springs to his last position:

"We could not refrain from protesting against a procedure which, if it is not a result of casual negligence, can have no other aim than to discredit a freer press movement in the public eye and to give the game to its opponents who fear to lose by playing fair."

The censorship, says this champion of freedom of the press, who is as daring as he is penetrating, if it is not merely the English leopard with the

inscription, "I sleep, wake me not!", has engaged in this "godless" procedure in order to discredit a freer press movement in the public eye.

Is there still any need to discredit a press movement which draws the censorship's attention to "*casual negligences*" and which expects to get its renown in the public eye from the "*censor's penknife*"?

This movement can be called "free" only to the extent that the licence of shamelessness is sometimes called "free." And is it not the shamelessness of absurdity and hypocrisy to try to pass as a champion of the freer press movement and at the same time to teach that the press will fall into the gutter the moment two gendarmes stop holding its arms.

What do we need the censorship for, what do we need this leading article for when the philosophical press discredits itself in the public eye? The author, of course, does not want to limit in any way "*the freedom of scientific research.*"

"In our day, *scientific research* is rightly allowed the widest and most boundless scope."

But the following pronouncement will show what a conception this gentleman has of scientific research:

"A sharp distinction must be made between what is required by the freedom of scientific research, which can but benefit Christianity itself, and what is beyond the bounds of scientific research."

Who should decide on the bounds of scientific research if not scientific research itself! According to the leading article bounds should be prescribed to scientific research. The leading article, therefore, knows an "*official reason*" which does not learn from scientific research but teaches it and which, like a learned providence, prescribes the length every hair should have to transform a scientific beard into one of world significance. The leading article believes in the scientific inspiration of the censorship.

Before further pursuing these "silly" explanations of the leading article on "scientific research," let us regale ourselves a while on Mr. H.'s "*philosophy of religion,*" his "own science"!

"Religion is the foundation of the state, as it is the most necessary condition for every social association not aimed merely at attaining some ulterior aim."

Proof: "In its crudest form as *childish fetishism* it raises man to a certain extent above sensuous appetites, which, if he lets himself be dominated exclusively by them, *debase him to an animal* and make him incapable of fulfilling any more elevated purpose."

The leading article calls fetishism the "*crudest* form" of religion. It therefore admits something which is recognized as established by all men of "sci-

entific research" even without his consensus, that "*animal worship*" is a *higher* religious form than fetishism, but does not animal worship debase man below the animal, does it not make the animal man's god?

Now this talk about "fetishism"! Real pfenning magazine learning! Fetishism is so far from raising man *above* the appetites that it is on the contrary "the *religion of sensuous appetites.*" The fantasy of the appetites tricks the fetish worshipper into believing that an "inanimate object" will give up its natural character to gratify his desires. The crude appetite of the fetish worshipper therefore *smashes* the fetish when the latter ceases to be its most devoted servant.

"In those nations which attained a higher historic significance, the prime of national life coincides with the highest development of their sense of religion, and the decline of their greatness and power coincides with the decline of their religious culture."

The truth will be obtained by exactly reversing the assertion of the author; he has turned history upside down. Greece and Rome are certainly the countries of the highest "historical culture" among the peoples of antiquity. The peak of Greece's greatest internal progress coincides with the time of Pericles, its external zenith with the time of Alexander. In Pericles' time the sophists, Socrates (who may be called philosophy incarnate), art and rhetoric had superseded religion. Alexander's time was the time of Aristotle, who rejected the eternity of the "individual" spirit and the god of the positive religions. And then Rome! Read Cicero! Epicurean, stoic or sceptic philosophy was the religion of the Romans of culture when Rome reached the zenith of its career. If with the downfall of the old states the religions of the old states disappear, this needs no further explanation than that the "true religion" of the peoples of antiquity was the cult of "their nationality," of their "state." It was not the downfall of the old religions that brought the downfall of the old states, but the downfall of the old states that brought the downfall of the old religions. And ignorance like that of the leading article proclaims itself the "legislator of scientific research" and writes "decrees" for philosophy.

"The whole ancient world was bound to collapse because the progress that the peoples made in their scientific development necessarily involved the discovery of the errors on which their religious views were based."

So, according to the leading article, the whole ancient world perished because scientific research disclosed the errors of the antique religions. Would the ancient world not have perished if research had passed over in silence the errors of the religions, if the author of the leading article had recommended to the Roman authorities to cut out Lucretius's and Lucian's works?

For the rest, we take the liberty of adding to Mr. H.'s erudition by means of a note.

Just as the downfall of the ancient world was approaching there arose the *school of Alexandria,* which strove to prove by force "the eternal truth" of Greek mythology and its thorough agreement "with the data of scientific research." The Emperor Julian also belonged to that trend, which thought it would cause the new spirit of the times that was asserting itself to disappear if it kept its eyes closed so as not to see it. But let us keep to Mr. H.'s results! In the religions of antiquity "the faint notions of the divine were veiled in the deepest night of error" and could therefore not resist scientific research. With Christianity the situation is reversed, as any thinking machine will conclude. Indeed, Mr. H. says:

"The best conclusions of scientific research have so far served only to confirm the truths of the Christian religion."

Apart from the fact that every philosophy of the past without exception was accused by the theologians of apostasy, not excepting even the pious Malebranche and the inspired Jakob Böhme, that Leibniz was accused by the Brunswick peasants of being a "*Löwenix*" (*Glaubenichts*—one who believes in nothing) and by the Englishman Clarke and Newton's other followers of being an atheist; apart from the fact that Christianity, as the most capable and consistent of the Protestant theologians affirm, cannot agree with reason because "worldly" and "religious" reason contradict each other, which Tertullian classically expressed: "*verum est, quia absurdum est*"; apart from all this, how can the agreement of scientific research with religion be proved except by forcing research to resolve itself into religion by letting it follow its own course. The least we can say is that further compulsion is no proof.

If, of course, you acknowledge beforehand as scientific research only what conforms to your own view, it is not difficult for you to make prophecies; but then what advantage has your assertion over that of the Indian Brahmin who proves the holiness of the Vedas by reserving for himself alone the right to read it!

Yes, says H., "scientific research." But any research that contradicts Christianity "stops half-way" or "takes a wrong road." Can one make the argument easier for oneself?

Once scientific research "has '*made clear*' to itself the content of what it has found, it will never clash with the truths of Christianity" but at the same time the state must ensure that this "*making clear*" is impossible, for research must never appeal to the powers of comprehension of the masses, i.e., must never become popular and clear *to itself.* Even if it is attacked by all the unscientific papers of the monarchy it must be modest and keep silence.

Christianity precludes the possibility of "any new decadence," but the police must be on its guard so that the philosophizing newspaper writers do not lead to decadence; it must keep an extremely strict guard. Error will be

recognized as such of itself in the struggle with truth, without any need for suppression by external force; but the state must make the struggle of truth easier by depriving the champions of "error" not indeed of internal freedom, which it cannot take away from them, but of the possibility of that freedom, the possibility of existence.

Christianity is sure of victory, but according to Mr. H. it is not so sure of victory that it can scorn the help of the police.

If from the outset everything which contradicts your faith is error and must be dealt with as such, what is there to distinguish your claims from those of the Mohammedans, from the claims of any other religion? Must philosophy adopt different principles for every country, according to the saying "different countries, different customs," in order not to contradict the basic truths of dogma? Must it believe in one country that 3 (1 = 1, in another that women have no soul and in yet another that beer is drunk in heaven? Is there not a *universal human* nature just as there is a universal nature of plants and heavenly bodies? Philosophy asks what is true, not what is acknowledged as such, what is true for all men, not what is true for individuals: philosophy's metaphysical truths do not know the boundaries of political geography; its political truths know too well where the "boundaries" begin to confuse the illusory horizon of particular world and national outlooks with the true horizon of the human mind. H. is the weakest of all the champions of Christianity.

His only proof in favor of Christianity is Christianity's *long existence*. Has not philosophy also existed from Thales down to our time and has it not precisely now, according to H. himself, greater claims and a greater opinion of its own importance than ever?

How, finally, does H. prove that the state is a "Christian" state, that instead of being a free association of moral human beings it is an association of believers, that its purpose, instead of being to make freedom a reality is to make dogma a reality? "Our European states all have Christianity as their foundation."

The *French* state too? The *Charte*, Article 3, says not that "every Christian" or "only the Christian" but "*tous les Français* are equally eligible for civil and military posts."

The Prussian *Landrecht* also says, Part II, Section XIII:

"The *primary* duty of the Supreme Head of the State is to maintain both internal and external peace and security and to safeguard each and every one in what is his from violence and interference."

But according to § 1 the Supreme Head of the State combines in his person all "duties and rights of the State." It does not say that the primary duty of the state is the suppression of heretical errors and bliss in the other world.

If, however, some European states are in fact founded upon Christianity, do those states conform to their conception, is the "pure existence" of a condition the right of that condition?

In the view of our H. it is so, for he reminds the supporters of Young Hegelianism "that according to the laws in force in the greater part of the state *marriage not consecrated by the Church* is declared *concubinage* and as such is punished by the *police* courts."

If, therefore, "marriage not consecrated by the Church" is considered on the Rhine according to the Napoleonic Code as "marriage" and on the Spree according to the Prussian *Landrecht* as "concubinage," the "police court" punishment must be an argument for the philosophers that what is right in one place is wrong in another, that not the Napoleonic Code but the *Landrecht* has the scientific and moral, the reasonable conception of marriage. This "philosophy of police court punishment" may be convincing in other places, it is not convincing in *Prussia.* For the rest, how little inclined the Prussian *Landrecht* is to "holy" marriage is shown by § 12, Part II, Section 1:

"However, a marriage which is allowed by the laws of the *Land* loses none of its *civil* validity by the fact that the dispensation of the spiritual authorities has not been requested or has been refused."

Here in Prussia, too, marriage is partly emancipated from the "spiritual authorities" and its "civil" validity is distinct from its "ecclesiastical."

It goes without saying that our great Christian state-philosopher has not a very "high" view of the state.

"Since our states are not only *associations based on right,* but at the same time true *educational institutions* with the only difference that they extend their care to a *broader* field than the institutions intended for the education of youth," etc., "all public education" is based "on the foundation of Christianity."

The education of our school children is based just as much on the classics of old and on science in general as on the Catechism.

The state, according to H., is distinguished from a children's home not by content but by size—it extends its "care" to a broader field.

But the true "public education" of the state is rather the reasonable and public being of the state; the state itself educates its members by making them members of the state, by changing the aims of the individual into general aims, coarse urge into moral inclination, natural independence into spiritual freedom, by the individual finding his delight in the life of the whole and the whole in the disposition of the individual.

The leading article, on the other hand, makes the state not an association of free human beings mutually educating one another, but a crowd of adults

whose destiny is to be educated from above and to pass from the "narrow" schoolroom to the "broader" one.

This theory of education and guardianship is here brought forward by a supporter of freedom of the press who, in his love for this belle, notes the "negligences of the censorship," who knows how to depict the "powers of comprehension of the masses" in the appropriate place (perhaps the powers of comprehension of the masses have seemed so precarious to *Kölnische Zeitung of late* because the masses have forgotten how to appreciate the superiorities of the "unphilosophical newspaper"?) and who advises scientists to have one view for the stage and another one for the backstage!

As the leading article showed us its "*short*" view of the state it will now expound to us its *low view "of Christianity."*

"All the newspaper articles in the world will never convince a population that feels on the whole well and happy that it is in a wretched predicament."

We should think not! The *material* feeling of well-being and happiness is more proof against newspaper articles than the bliss-giving and all-conquering assurance of faith! H. does not sing "Our God is a strong fortress." The truly believing heart of the "masses" is probably more exposed to the rust of doubt than the refined worldly culture of the "few."

H. fears "even incitement to insurrection in a *well-ordered* state" less than in a "well-ordered church," although the latter may besides be led by the "spirit of God" to all truth. A fine believer, and the grounds he has! Political articles are within the comprehension of the masses, he says, but philosophical articles are beyond it!

If, finally, we contrast the leading article's hint—"the *half*-measures that have been taken recently against Young Hegelianism have had the consequences half-measures usually have"—to the *ingenuous* wish that the last steps of the Hegelians might pass over "without *too unfavourable* consequences for them," we can understand Cornwall's words in *King Lear:*

> He cannot flatter, he!—
> An honest man and plain,—he must speak truth:
> An' they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
> These kind of knaves I know, which in their plainness
>
> Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
> Than twenty silly ducking observants,
> That stretch their duties nicely.

We would think we were insulting the readers of *Rheinische Zeitung* if we fancied they would be satisfied with the comical rather than serious show of a

ci-devant liberal, "a young man of days gone by," being sent back to where he belongs; we wish to say a few words about *"the matter itself."* As long as we were engaged in a polemic with the ailing article it would not have been right to interrupt it in the process of its self-annihilation.

First the question is raised: "Should philosophy discuss religious matters also in newspaper articles?"

This question can be answered only by criticizing it.

Philosophy, above all German philosophy, has a propensity to solitude, to systematical seclusion, to dispassionate self-contemplation which opposes it from the outset in its estrangement to the quick-witted and alive-to-events newspapers whose only delight is in information. Philosophy, taken in its systematic development, is unpopular; its secret weaving within itself seems to the layman to be an occupation as overstrained as it is unpractical; it is considered as a professor of magic whose incantations sound pompous because they are unintelligible.

Philosophy, in accordance with its character, has never made the first step towards replacing the ascetic priestly vestments by the light conventional garb of the newspapers. But philosophers do not grow out of the soil like mushrooms, they are the product of their time and of their people, whose most subtle, precious and invisible sap circulates in philosophical ideas. The same spirit that builds railways by the hands of the workers builds philosophical systems in the brain of the philosophers. Philosophy does not stand outside the world any more than man's brain is outside of him because it is not in his stomach; but, of course, philosophy is in the world with its brain before it stands on the earth with its feet, whereas many another human sphere has long been rooted in the earth by its feet and plucks the fruits of the world with its hands before it has any idea that the "head" also belongs to the world or that this world is the world of the head.

Because every true philosophy is the spiritual quintessence of its time, the time must come when philosophy not only internally by its content but externally by its appearance comes into contact and mutual reaction with the real contemporary world. Philosophy then ceases to be a definite system in presence of other definite systems, it becomes philosophy generally, in presence of the world; it becomes the philosophy of the world of the present. The formal features which attest that philosophy has achieved that importance, that it is the living soul of culture, that philosophy is becoming worldly and the world philosophical, were the same in all times: any history book will show, repeated with stereotyped fidelity, the simplest rituals which unmistakably mark philosophy's introduction into drawing-rooms and priests' studies, the editorial offices of newspapers and the antechambers of courts, into the hatred

and the love of the people of the time. Philosophy is introduced into the world by the clamor of its enemies who betray their internal infection by their desperate appeals for help against the blaze of ideas. These cries of its enemies mean as much for philosophy as the first cry of a child for the anxious ear of the mother, they are the cry of life of the ideas which have burst open the orderly hieroglyphic husk of the system and become citizens of the world. The Corybantes and Cabiri, who with the roll of drums announce to the world the birth of baby Zeus, first turn against the religious section of the philosophers, partly because their inquisitorial instinct can secure a firmer hold on this sentimental side of the public, partly because the public, to which the opponents of philosophy also belong, can feel the ideal sphere of philosophy only with its ideal feelers, and the only field of ideas in the value of which the public believes almost as much as in the system of material needs is that of religious ideas, and, finally, because religion polemizes not against a definite system of philosophy but against the philosophy generally of the definite systems.

The true philosophy of the present does not differ as far as this fate is concerned from the true philosophies of the past. Indeed, this fate is a proof that history owed to the truth of philosophy.

And for six years the German papers have been drumming against the religious trend in philosophy, calumniating it, distorting it, bowdlerizing it. *Allgemeine Augsburger* sang bravuras, nearly every overture played the theme that philosophy was not worthy of being discussed by the lady sage, that it was the idle bragging of youth, a fashion for blasé coteries. But in spite of all that it could not be got rid of and there was more drumming, for in its anti-philosophical caterwauling the *Augsburger* plays but one instrument, the monotonous kettledrum. All German papers, from *Berliner politisches Wochenblatt* and *Hamburger Correspondent*16 to the obscure local papers, down to *Kölnische Zeitung* blared out about Hegel and Schelling, Feuerbach and Bauer, *Deutsche Jahrbücher,* etc.—Finally the curiosity of the public was aroused and it wanted to see the Leviathan with its own eyes, all the more as semi-official articles threatened philosophy that it would have a legal syllabus officially prescribed for it. And that was when philosophy appeared in the papers. Long had it kept silence before the self-complacent superficiality which boasted in a few stale newspaper phrases that it could blow away like soap-bubbles years of study of genius, the hard-won fruits of self-sacrificing solitude, the results of that invisible but slowly extenuating struggle of contemplation; philosophy had even *protested against the newspapers* as being an inappropriate field, but in the end it had to break its silence, it became a newspaper correspondent and—unheard-of diversion!—it suddenly occurred to the garrulous newspaper purveyors that philosophy is no food for the newspaper public and they could

not refrain from drawing the attention of the governments to the dishonesty of bringing questions of philosophy and religion into the sphere of the newspapers not to enlighten the public but to attain ulterior aims.

What is there so bad that philosophy could say about religion or about itself that your newspaper clamor had not long ago imputed to it in far worse and more frivolous terms? It only needs to repeat what you unphilosophical Capuchins have preached about it in thousands and thousands of polemics, and it has said the worst.

But philosophy speaks differently of religious and philosophical objects than you have. You speak without having studied them, it speaks after study; you appeal to the emotions, it appeals to reason; you curse, it teaches; you promise heaven and earth, it promises nothing but truth; you demand faith in your faith, it demands not faith in its results but the test of doubt; you frighten, it calms. And truly, philosophy is world-wise enough to know that its results flatter the desire for pleasure or the egoism neither of the heavenly nor of the earthly world; but the public that loves truth and knowledge for their own sakes will be able to measure itself in judgment and morality with ignorant, servile, inconsistent and mercenary scribes.

Admittedly somebody or other, by reason of the worthlessness of his intellect or views, may misinterpret philosophy, but do not you Protestants believe that the Catholics misinterpret Christianity, do you not reproach the Christian religion with the disgraceful times of the eighth and ninth centuries, the night of St. Bartholomew and the Inquisition? There are conclusive proofs that the hatred of the Protestant theology for philosophers arises largely out of philosophy's tolerance towards the particular confession as such. Feuerbach and Strauss were reproached more for maintaining that Catholic dogmas were Christian than for stating that the dogmas of Christianity were not dogmas of reason.

But if occasional individuals cannot digest modern philosophy and die of philosophical indigestion, that proves no more against philosophy than the occasional blowing up of a few passengers by the bursting of a boiler proves against mechanics.

The question whether philosophical and religious matters should be discussed in newspapers resolves itself in its own emptiness.

If such questions already have an interest for the public as *newspaper questions*, they have become *questions of the day*; then the point is not whether they should be discussed but where and how they should be discussed, whether within the bounds of the family and the hotels, of the schools and the churches, but not by the press; by the opponents of philosophy, but not by the philosophers; whether in the obscure language of private opinion but not in the clarifying language of public reason. Then the point is whether what lives in real-

ity belongs to the realm of the press; it is no longer a question of a particular content of the press, the question is the general one whether the press must be really the press, i.e., a free press.

From the first question we completely separate the second: "Should politics be dealt with philosophically by the newspapers in a so-called Christian state?"

If religion becomes a political quality, an object of politics, there seems to be hardly any need to mention that the newspapers not only may, but must, discuss political objects. It seems from the start that the wisdom of this world, philosophy, has more right to bother about the kingdom of this world, about the state, than the wisdom of the other world, religion. The point here is not whether the state should be philosophized about, but whether it should be philosophized about well or badly, philosophically or unphilosophically, with prejudice or without, with consciousness or without, consistently or inconsistently, in a completely rational or half-rational way. If you make religion a theory of state right, then you make religion itself a kind of philosophy.

Was it not Christianity before anything else that separated church and state?

Read Saint Augustine's *De Civitate Dei,* study the Fathers of the Church and the spirit of Christianity and then come back and tell us which is the "Christian State," the church or the state! Does not every minute of your practical life give the lie to your theory? Do you consider it wrong to appeal to the courts when you are cheated? But the apostle writes that that is wrong. Do you offer your right cheek when you are struck upon the left, or do you not institute proceedings for assault? Yet the Gospel forbids that. Do you not claim your reasonable right in this world? Do you not grumble at the slightest raising of a duty? Are you not furious at the slightest infringement of your personal liberty? But you have been told that the sufferings of this life are not to be compared with the bliss of the future, that suffering in patience and the bliss of hope are cardinal virtues.

Are not most of your court proceedings and the majority of civil laws concerned with property? But you have been told that your treasure is not of this world. If you base yourselves on giving to Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to God the things which are God's, do not consider the mammon of gold alone but at least just as much free reason as the Caesar of this world, and the "action of free reason" is what we call philosophizing.

When in the Holy Alliance at first a quasi-religious alliance of states was to be formed and religion was to be the state motto of Europe, *the Pope* showed profound sense and perfect consistence in refusing to join it, for in his view the universal Christian link between nations was the Church and not diplomacy, not a worldly alliance of states.

The truly religious state is the theocratic state; the prince of such states must be either the God of religion, Jehovah himself, as in the Jewish state; God's representative, the Dalai Lama, as in Tibet; or finally, as Görres correctly demands of Christian states in his last work, they must all submit to a church which is an "infallible church." For if, as in Protestantism, there is no supreme head of the church, the domination of religion is nothing but the religion of domination, the cult of the will of the government.

Once a state includes several confessions with equal rights it cannot be a religious state without violating particular confessions; it cannot be a church which condemns adherents of another confession as heretics, which makes every piece of bread dependent on faith, which makes dogma the link between separate individuals and existence as citizens of the state. Ask the Catholic inhabitants of "poor green Erin," ask the Huguenots before the French Revolution: they did not appeal to religion, for their religion was not the religion of the state; they appealed to the "Rights of Humanity" and philosophy interprets the Rights of Humanity and demands that the state be the state of human nature.

But the half, the limited, rationalism, which is as unbelieving as it is theological, says that the universal Christian spirit, irrespective of confessional differences, must be the spirit of the state! It is the greatest irreligiousness, the wantonness of worldly reason, to separate the general spirit of religion from the positive religion; this separation of religion from its dogmas and institutions is equal to asserting that the universal spirit of right must reign in the state irrespective of the definite laws and the positive institutions of right.

If you presume to stand so high above religion as to have the right to separate the general spirit of religion from its positive definitions, what reproach have you to make to the philosophers if they want to make the separation complete and not a half-way one, if they proclaim not the Christian, but the human spirit, the universal spirit of religion?

Christians live in states with differing constitutions, some in a republic, some in an absolute, some again in a constitutional monarchy. Christianity does not decide on the *correctness* of the constitutions, for it knows no distinction between constitutions, it teaches, as religion must: Submit to the authority, for *all authority* is ordained by God. The correctness of state constitutions is, therefore, to be judged not according to Christianity, not according to the nature, the essence of the state itself, not according to the nature of Christian society, but according to the nature of human society.

The Byzantine state was the properly religious state, for there dogmas were matters of state, but the Byzantine state was the worst of all states. The states

of the *ancien régime* were the most Christian states, nonetheless they were states of "the will of court."

There is a dilemma that "sound" common sense cannot solve. Either the Christian state corresponds to the concept of the state as a realization of rational freedom, and then nothing else can be demanded for it to be a Christian state than that it be a reasonable state; then it is enough to develop the state out of the reason of human relations, a work accomplished by philosophy. Or the state of rational freedom cannot be developed out of Christianity: then you will yourselves concede that this development does not lie in the tendency of Christianity, for Christianity does not wish for a bad state, and any state which is not the embodiment of rational freedom is a bad state.

Answer the dilemma as you like, you will have to concede that the state is not to be constituted from religion but from the reason of freedom. Only the crassest ignorance can assert that the theory of making the state-concept independent is a passing whim of modern philosophers.

Philosophy has done nothing in politics that physics, mathematics, medicine, every science, has not done within its own sphere. Bacon of Verulam declared theological physics to be a virgin vowed to God and barren; he emancipated physics from theology and she became fruitful. You have no more to ask the politician if he has faith than the doctor. Immediately before and after the time of Copernicus's great discoveries on the true solar system the law of gravitation of the state was discovered: the center of gravity of the state was found within the state itself. As various European governments tried to apply this result with the initial superficiality of practice to the system of equilibrium of states, similarly Macchiavelli and Campanella began before them and Hobbes, Spinoza, and Hugo Grotius afterwards down to Rousseau, Fichte and Hegel, to consider the state with the eye of man and to develop its natural laws from reason and experience, not from theology, any more than Copernicus let himself be influenced by Joshua's supposed command to the sun to stand still over Gideon and the moon over the vale of Ajalon. Modern philosophy has only continued a work already started by Heraclitus and Aristotle. So it is not the reason of modern philosophy that you are polemizing against, but the ever modern philosophy of reason. Naturally, the ignorance that yesterday or perhaps the day before discovered in *Rheinische* or *Königsberger Zeitung* the age-old ideas on the state considers the ideas of history as notions which occurred overnight to certain individuals because they appear new to it and came to it overnight; it forgets that it has assumed the old role of the doctor of Sorbonne who considered it his duty to accuse Montesquieu in public because the latter was frivolous enough to maintain that the political quality, not the virtue of the Church, was the highest quality in the state; it forgets that it has

assumed the role of Joachim Lange, who denounced Wolf because his doctrine of predestination would lead to desertion among soldiers and thereby to a relaxation of military discipline and finally to the collapse of the state; lastly it forgets that the Prussian *Landrecht* comes from the very school of philosophy of "that Wolf" and the Napoleonic Code comes not from the Old Testament but from the school of ideas of Voltaire, Rousseau, Condorcet, Mirabeu, and Montesquieu and from the French Revolution. Ignorance is a demon and we are afraid it will yet play us more than one tragedy; the greatest Greek poets were right when they represented it in the terrible dramas of the royal houses of Mycenae and Thebes as tragic fate.

Whereas the earlier teachers of state law construed the state out of ambition or sociability, or even reason, though not out of the reason of society but rather out of the reason of the individual, the more ideal and profound view of modern philosophy construes it out of the idea of the whole. It considers the state as the great organism in which freedom of right, of morals and of politics has to be implemented and in which in the laws of the state the individual citizen merely obeys the natural laws of his own reason, human reason. *Sapienti sat* ["sufficient for the wise man"].

We shall conclude with a further philosophical farewell to *Kölnische Zeitung*. It was reasonable of it to take to itself a liberal "of times gone by." One can most comfortably be both liberal and reactionary at the same time, if only one is always skilful enough to address only liberals of the recent past who know no other dilemma than that of Vidocq—"prisoner or gaoler." It was still more reasonable that the liberal of the recent past combated the liberals of the present. Without parties there is no development, without a parting there is no progress. We hope that with the leading article of No. 179 *Kölnische Zeitung* has begun a new era, the era of character.

"ON THE JEWISH QUESTION" (1843)

Marx had been reading about the French and American revolutions and became convinced that neither produced true human emancipation but only freed individuals to pursue their own self-interests in society. The essay is sometimes cited as evidence of Marx's anti-Semitism. But it is really a criticism of religion in general for focusing upon the private life of individuals rather than the emancipation of public life, of life in work and society. By this time (1843) Marx fully identified himself with the cause of socialism, a public stance that caused his exile to Paris.

BRUNO BAUER, *THE JEWISH QUESTION*, BRUNSWICK, 1843

The German Jews want emancipation. What sort of emancipation do they want? *Civil, political* emancipation.

Bruno Bauer answers them: No one in Germany is politically emancipated. We ourselves are not free. How are we to liberate you? You Jews are *egoists* if you demand a special emancipation for yourselves as Jews. You should work as Germans for the political emancipation of Germany and as men for the emancipation of mankind, and you should look upon the particular form of oppression and shame which you experience not as an exception to the rule but rather as a confirmation of it.

Or do the Jews want to be put on an equal footing with *Christian subjects*? If so, they are recognizing the *Christian state* as legitimate, they are recognizing the regime of general enslavement. Why should their particular yoke not please them when they are pleased to accept the general yoke? Why should the German be interested in the liberation of the Jew when the Jew is not interested in the liberation of the German?

The *Christian* state only knows *privileges*. In it the Jew has the privilege of being a Jew. As a Jew he has rights which the Christian does not have. Why does he want rights he does not have and which Christians enjoy?

If the Jew wants to be emancipated from the Christian state, then he is demanding that the Christian state give up its *religious* prejudice. But does the Jew give up *his* religious prejudice? Does he have the right, then, to demand of someone else that he renounce his religion?

The Christian state is by its very *nature* incapable of emancipating the Jew; but, Bauer adds, the Jew by his very nature cannot be emancipated. As long as the state is Christian and the Jew Jewish, they are both equally incapable of either giving or receiving emancipation.

The Christian state can behave towards the Jew only in the manner of the Christian state, that is, by granting him as a privilege the right to separate himself off from the other subjects but subjecting him to the pressure of the other separate spheres. He experiences this pressure all the more intensely since as a Jew he is in *religious* opposition to the dominant religion. But the Jew himself can behave only like a Jew towards the state, i.e. treat it as something foreign, for he opposes his chimerical nationality to actual nationality, his illusory law to actual law, he considers himself entitled to separate himself from humanity, he refuses on principle to take any part in the movement of history, he looks forward to a future which has nothing in common with the future of mankind as a whole, and he sees himself as a member of the Jewish people and the Jewish people as the chosen people.

On what grounds, then, do you Jews want emancipation? On account of your religion? It is the deadly enemy of the religion of the state. As citizens? There are no citizens in Germany. As men? You are not men, any more than those to whom you appeal.

After criticizing previous positions and solutions, Bauer poses the question of Jewish emancipation in a new way. What, he asks, is the *nature* of the Jew who is to be emancipated and the Christian state which is to emancipate him? He answers with a critique of the Jewish religion, he analyses the *religious* opposition between Judaism and Christianity and he explains the essence of the Christian state, all this with dash, perception, wit, and thoroughness in a style as precise as it is pithy and trenchant.

How then does Bauer solve the Jewish question? What is the result? To formulate a question is to answer it. To make a critique of the Jewish question is to answer the Jewish question. We shall therefore sum up as follows:

We must emancipate ourselves before we can emancipate others.

The most rigid form of opposition between Jew and Christian is the *religious* opposition. How does one resolve an opposition? By making it impossible. How does one make a *religious* opposition impossible? By *abolishing religion.* Once Jew and Christian recognize their respective religious as nothing more than *different stages in the development of the human spirit,* as snake-skins cast off by *history,* and *man* as the snake which wore them, they will no longer be in religious opposition, but in a purely critical and *scientific,* a human relationship. *Science* will then be their unity. But oppositions in science are resolved by science itself.

The *German* Jew in particular suffers from the general lack of political emancipation and the pronounced Christianity of the state. For Bauer, however, the Jewish question has a universal significance which is independent of the specific German conditions. It is the question of the relationship of religion and state, of the *contradiction between religious prejudice and political emancipation.* Emancipation from religion is presented as a condition both for the Jew who wants to be politically emancipated and for the state which is to emancipate him and itself be emancipated.

"Very well," you say, and the Jew himself says it, "the Jew should not be emancipated because he is a Jew, because he has such an admirable code of universally human ethical principles. Rather, the *Jew* will recede behind the *citizen* and be a *citizen,* in spite of the fact that he is a Jew and is to remain a Jew; i.e., he is and remains a *Jew* in spite of the fact that he is a *citizen* and lives in universal human conditions: his Jewish and restricted nature always triumphs in the long run over his human and political obligations. The *prej-*

udice remains, even though it is overtaken by *universal* principles. But if it remains, it is more likely to overtake everything else."

"The Jew could only remain a Jew in political life in a sophistical sense, in appearance; if he wanted to remain a Jew, the mere appearance would therefore be the essential and would triumph, i.e. his *life in the state* would be nothing more than an appearance or a momentary exception to the essential nature of things and to the rule."

Now let us see how Bauer formulates the role of the state.

"France," he says, "recently provided us, in connection with the Jewish question (as she constantly does in all other *political* questions), with the glimpse of a life which is free but which revokes its freedom by law, thus declaring it to be a mere appearance, and on the other hand denies its free law through its actions."

"Universal freedom is not yet law in France and the *Jewish question* is *not* yet settled because legal freedom—the equality of all citizens—is restricted in actual life, which continues to be dominated and fragmented by religious privileges, and because the lack of freedom in actual life reacts on the law and forces it to sanction the division of what are intrinsically free citizens into oppressed and oppressors."

So when would the Jewish question be settled in France?

"The Jew, for example, would have stopped being a Jew if he did not allow his [religious] laws to prevent him from fulfilling his duties to the state and to his fellow citizens, for example, if he went to the Chamber of Deputies on the Sabbath and took part in the public proceedings. All *religious privileges,* including the monopoly of a privileged church, would have to be abolished and if some or many or *even the overwhelming majority still considered themselves obliged to fulfil their religious duties,* then this should be *left to them* as a *purely private affair."* "There is no longer any religion when there is no longer any privileged religion. Deprive religion of its powers of excommunication and it ceases to exist." "Just as M. Martin du Nord saw the proposal to omit all mention of Sunday in the law as a declaration that Christianity has ceased to exist, with the same right (and this right is well founded) the declaration that the law of the Sabbath is no longer binding on the Jew would be a proclamation of the dissolution of Judaism."

So Bauer demands on the one hand that the Jew give up Judaism and that man in general give up religion in order to be emancipated as a *citizen.* On the other hand, it logically follows that for him the *political* abolition of religion amounts to the abolition of religion as a whole. The state which presupposes religion is not yet a true, a real state.

"Admittedly the idea of religion gives the state some guarantees. But what state? *What sort of state*?"

It is at this point that the *one-sidedness* of Bauer's treatment of the Jewish question emerges.

It was in no way sufficient to ask who should emancipate and who be emancipated. It was necessary for the critique to ask a third question: *What kind of emancipation* is involved? What are the essential conditions of the emancipation which is required? Only the critique of *political emancipation* itself would constitute a definitive critique of the Jewish question itself and its true resolution into the "general question of the age."

Because Bauer fails to raise the question to this level, he falls into contradictions. He poses conditions which are not essential to *political* emancipation itself. He raises questions which are not contained within the problem and he solves problems which leave his question unanswered. When Bauer says of the opponents of Jewish emancipation: "Their only mistake was to presuppose that the Christian state was the only true one and not to subject it to the same criticism as Judaism," his own mistake lies clearly in the fact that he subjects only the "Christian state" to criticism, and not the "state as such," that he fails to examine *the relationship between political emancipation and human emancipation* and that he therefore poses conditions which can be explained only by his uncritical confusion of political emancipation and universally human emancipation. Bauer asks the Jews: Do you from your standpoint have the right to demand *political emancipation*? We pose the question the other way round: Does the standpoint of *political* emancipation have the right to demand from the Jews the abolition of Judaism and from man the abolition of religion?

The form in which the Jewish question is posed differs according to the state in which the Jew finds himself. In Germany, where there is no political state, no state as such, the Jewish question is a purely *theological question.* The Jew is in *religious* opposition to the state, which acknowledges Christianity as its foundation. This state is a theologian *ex professo.* Criticism is here criticism of theology, double-edged criticism, criticism of Christian and of Jewish theology. But we are still moving in the province of theology, however *critically* we may be moving in it.

In France, in the *constitutional* state, the Jewish question is a question of constitutionalism, a question of the *incompleteness of political emancipation.* Since the *appearance* of a state religion is preserved here in the formula—albeit an insignificant and self-contradictory one—of a *religion of the majority,* the relationship of the Jew to the state also retains the *appearance* of a religious, theological opposition.

Only in the free states of North America—or at least in some of them—does the Jewish question lose its *theological* significance and become a truly *secular* question. Only where the political state exists in its fully developed form can the relationship of the Jew and of religious man in general to the political state, i.e., the relationship of religion and state, appear in its characteristic and pure form. The criticism of this relationship ceases to be a theological criticism as soon as the state ceases to relate itself in a *theological* way to religion, as soon as the state relates to religion as a state, i.e., *politically.* Criticism then becomes *criticism of the political state.* At this point, where the question ceases to be *theological,* Bauer's criticism ceases to be critical.

"In the United States there is neither a state religion nor an officially proclaimed religion of the majority, nor the predominance of one faith over another. The state is foreign to all faiths." There are even some states in North America where "the constitution does not impose religious beliefs or practice as a condition of political privileges." Nevertheless, "people in the United States do not believe that a man without religion can be an honest man."

And yet North America is the land of religiosity *par excellence,* as Beaumont, Tocqueville, and the Englishman Hamilton all assure us. However, we are using the North American states only as an example. The question is: What is the relationship between *complete* political emancipation and religion? If in the land of complete political emancipation we find not only that religion *exists* but that it exists in a *fresh* and *vigorous* form, that proves that the existence of religion does not contradict the perfection of the state. But since the existence of religion is the existence of a defect, the source of this defect must be looked for in the *nature* of the state itself. We no longer see religion as the *basis* but simply as a *phenomenon* of secular narrowness. We therefore explain the religious restriction on the free citizens from the secular restriction they experience. We do not mean to say that they must do away with their religious restriction in order to transcend their secular limitations. We do not turn secular questions into theological questions. We turn theological questions into secular questions. History has been resolved into superstition for long enough. We are now resolving superstition into history. The question of the *relationship of political emancipation to religion* becomes for us the question of the *relationship of political emancipation to human emancipation.* We criticize the religious weakness of the political state by criticizing the political state in its *secular* construction, *regardless* of its religious weaknesses. We humanize the contradiction between the state and a *particular religion,* for example Judaism, by resolving it into the contradiction between the state and *particular secular* elements, and we humanize the contradiction between the state and *religion in general* by resolving it into the contradiction between the state and its own general *presuppositions.*

The *political* emancipation of the Jew, the Christian, the *religious* man in general, is the *emancipation of the state* from Judaism, from Christianity, from *religion* in general. The state emancipates itself from religion in a form and manner peculiar to its nature as *state* by emancipating itself from the *state religion*, i.e., by acknowledging no religion, by instead acknowledging itself as state. *Political* emancipation from religion is not complete and consistent emancipation from religion, because political emancipation is not the complete and consistent form of *human* emancipation.

The limitations of political emancipation are immediately apparent from the fact that the *state* can liberate itself from a restriction without man himself being *truly* free of it, that a state can be a *free state* without man himself being *a free man*. Bauer himself tacitly admits this when he poses the following condition for political emancipation:

"All religious privileges, including the monopoly of a privileged church, would have to be abolished and if some or many or even the *overwhelming majority still considered themselves obliged to fulfill their religious duties*, then this should be left to them as a *purely private affair*."

Therefore the *state* can have emancipated itself from religion even if the *overwhelming majority* is still religious. And the overwhelming majority does not cease to be religious by being religious *in private*.

But the attitude of the state, especially *the free state*, to religion is still only the attitude to religion of the *men* who make up the state. It therefore follows that man liberates himself from a restriction through the *medium of the state*, in a *political* way, by transcending this restriction in an *abstract* and *restricted* manner, in a partial manner, in contradiction with himself. It also follows that when man liberates himself *politically* he does so in a *devious way*, through a *medium*, even though the medium is a *necessary* one. Finally it follows that even when man proclaims himself an atheist through the mediation of the state, i.e., when he proclaims the state an atheist, he still remains under the constraints of religion because he acknowledges his atheism only deviously, through a medium. Religion is precisely that: the devious acknowledgement of man, through an intermediary. The state is the intermediary between man and man's freedom. Just as Christ is the intermediary to whom man attributes all his divinity, all his *religious constraints*, so the state is the intermediary to which man transfers all his non-divinity, all his *human unconstraint*.

The *political* elevation of man above religion shares all the shortcomings and all the advantages of political elevation in general. For example, the state as state annuls *private property*, man declares in a *political* way that private property is *abolished*, immediately the *property qualification* is abolished for active and passive election rights, as has happened in many North American states.

Hamilton interprets this fact quite correctly from the political standpoint: "*The masses have gained a victory over the property owners and financial wealth.*" Is not private property abolished in an ideal sense when the propertyless come to legislate for the propertied? The *property qualification* is the last *political* form to recognize private property.

And yet the political annulment of private property does not mean the abolition of private property; on the contrary, it even presupposes it. The state in its own way abolishes distinctions based on *birth, rank, education,* and *occupation* when it declares birth, rank, education, and occupation to be *non-political* distinctions, when it proclaims that every member of the people is an equal participant in popular sovereignty regardless of these distinctions, when it treats all those elements which go to make up the actual life of the people from the standpoint of the state. Nevertheless the state allows private property, education, and occupation to *act* and assert their *particular* nature in *their* own way, i.e., as private property, as education and as occupation. Far from abolishing these *factual* distinctions, the state presupposes them in order to exist, it only experiences itself as *political state* and asserts its *universality* in opposition to these elements. *Hegel* therefore defines the relationship of the political state to religion quite correctly when he says:

> In order for the state to come into existence as the *self-knowing* ethical actuality of spirit, it is essential that it should be distinct from the form of authority and of faith. But this distinction emerges only in so far as divisions occur in the ecclesiastical sphere itself. It is only in this way that the state, above the *particular* churches, has attained to the universality of thought—its formal principle—and is bringing this universality into existence.

Of course! It is only in this way, *above* the *particular* elements, that the state constitutes itself as universality.

The perfected political state is by its nature the *species-life* of man in *opposition* to his material life. All the presuppositions of this egoistic life continue to exist *outside* the sphere of the state in *civil* society, but as qualities of civil society. Where the political state has attained its full degree of development man leads a double life, a life in heaven and a life on earth, not only in his mind, in his consciousness, but in *reality.* He lives in the *political community,* where he regards himself as a *communal being,* and in *civil society,* where he is active as a *private individual,* regards other men as means, debases himself to a means and becomes a plaything of alien powers. The relationship of the political state to civil society is just as spiritual as the relationship of heaven to earth. The state stands in the same opposition to civil society and overcomes it in the same way as religion overcomes the restriction of the profane world, i.e.

it has to acknowledge it again, reinstate it, and allow itself to be dominated by it. Man in his *immediate* reality, in civil society, is a profane being. Here, where he regards himself and is regarded by others as a real individual, he is an illusory phenomenon. In the state, on the other hand, where he is considered to be a species-being, he is the imaginary member of a fictitious sovereignty, he is divested of his real individual life and filled with an unreal universality.

The conflict in which the individual believer in a *particular* religion finds himself with his own citizenship and with other men as members of the community is reduced to the *secular* division between the *political* state and civil society. For man as *bourgeois* [a member of civil society] "life in the state is nothing more than an appearance or a momentary exception to the essential nature of things and to the rule." Of course the *bourgeois*, like the Jew, only takes part in the life of the state in a sophistical way, just as the *citoyen* only remains a Jew or a bourgeois in a sophistical way; but this sophistry is not personal. It is the *sophistry of the political state* itself. The difference between the religious man and the citizen is the difference between the tradesman and the citizen, between the day-laborer and the citizen, between the landowner and the citizen, between the *living individual* and the *citizen*. The contradiction which exists between religious man and political man is the same as exists between the *bourgeois* and the *citoyen*, between the member of civil society and his *political lion's skin*.

This secular conflict to which the Jewish question ultimately reduces itself—the relationship of the political state to its presuppositions, whether they be material elements, like private property, etc., or spiritual ones, like education, religion, the conflict between the *general interest* and the *private interest*, the split between the *political state* and *civil society*—these secular oppositions Bauer does not touch, but polemicizes instead against their *religious* expression:

> It is precisely its foundation—the need that assures *civil society* its existence and *guarantees its necessity*—that exposes it to constant dangers, maintains an element of uncertainty in it and brings forth that restless alternation of wealth and poverty, need and prosperity which constitutes change in general.

Compare the whole section "Civil Society," which broadly follows the main features of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Civil society in its opposition to the political state is recognized as necessary because the political state is recognized as necessary.

Political emancipation is certainly a big step forward. It may not be the last form of general human emancipation, but it is the last form of human emancipation *within* the prevailing scheme of things. Needless to say, we are here speaking of real, practical emancipation.

Man emancipates himself *politically* from religion by banishing it from the province of public law to that of private law. It is no longer the spirit of the *state* where man behaves—although in a limited way, in a particular form and a particular sphere—as a species-being, in community with other men. It has become the spirit of *civil society,* the sphere of egoism and of the *bellum omnium contra omnes.* It is no longer the essence of *community* but the essence of *difference.* It has become the expression of the *separation* of man from his *community,* from himself, and from other men, which is what it was *originally.* It is now only the abstract confession of an individual oddity, of a *private whim,* a caprice. The continual splintering of religion in North America, for example, already gives it the *external* form of a purely individual affair. It has been relegated to the level of a private interest and exiled from the real community. But it is important to understand where the limit of political emancipation lies. The splitting of man into his *public* and his *private* self and the *displacement* of religion from the state to civil society is not one step in the process of political emancipation but its *completion.* Hence political emancipation neither abolishes nor tries to abolish man's *real* religiosity.

The *dissolution* of man into Jew and citizen, Protestant and citizen, religious man and citizen, is not a denial of citizenship or an avoidance of political emancipation: it *is political emancipation itself,* it is the *political* way of emancipating oneself from religion. Of course, in periods when the political state as political state comes violently into being out of civil society and when human self-liberation attempts to realize itself in the form of political self-liberation, the state can and must proceed to the *abolition of religion,* to the *destruction* of religion; but only in the same way as it proceeds to the abolition of private property (by imposing a maximum, by confiscation, by progressive taxation) and the abolition of life (by the *guillotine*). At those times when it is particularly self-confident, political life attempts to suppress its presupposition, civil society and its elements, and to constitute itself as the real, harmonious species-life of man. But it only manages to do this in *violent* contradiction to the conditions of its own existence, by declaring the revolution *permanent,* and for that reason the political drama necessarily ends up with the restoration of religion, private property, and all the elements of civil society, just as war ends with peace.

Indeed, the perfected Christian state is not the so-called *Christian* state which recognizes Christianity as its foundation, as the state religion, and which therefore excludes other religions. The perfected Christian state is rather the *atheist* state, the *democratic* state, the state which relegates religion to the level of the other elements of civil society. The state which is still theological, which still officially professes the Christian faith, which still does not dare to declare

itself a *state,* has not yet succeeded in expressing in *secular, human* form, in its *reality* as state, the *human* basis of which Christianity is the exaggerated expression. The so-called Christian state is simply the *non-state,* since it is only the *human basis* of the Christian religion, and not Christianity as a religion, which can realize itself in real human creations.

The so-called Christian state is the Christian negation of the state, but is certainly not the political realization of Christianity. The state which still professes Christianity in the form of religion does not yet profess it in a political form, for it still behaves towards religion in a religious manner, i.e. it is not the *true realization* of the human foundation of religion because it continues to accept the *unreality* and the *imaginary* form of this human core. The so-called Christian state is the *imperfect* state and Christianity serves as *supplement* and *sanctification* of this imperfection. Therefore religion necessarily becomes a *means* for the state, which is a *hypocritical* state. A *perfected* state which counts religion as one of its presuppositions on account of the deficiency which exists in the general *nature* of the state is not at all the same thing as an *imperfect* state which declares religion its *foundation* on account of the deficiency which lies in its *particular existence* as a deficient state. In the latter case religion becomes *imperfect politics.* In the former, the imperfection even of perfected *politics* manifests itself in religion. The so-called Christian state needs the Christian religion to complete itself as a *state.* The democratic state, the true state, does not need religion for its political completion. On the contrary, it can discard religion, because in it the human foundation of religion is realized in a secular way. The so-called Christian state, on the other hand, behaves in a political way towards religion and in a religious way towards politics. In the same way as it demeans political forms to mere appearances, it demeans religion to a mere appearance.

In order to make this opposition clearer let us consider Bauer's construction of the Christian state, a construction which derives from his study of the Christian–Germanic state.

Bauer says:

> In order to prove the *impossibility* or the *non-existence* of the Christian state, people have recently been making frequent references to those passages in the Gospel which the [present] state *not only* does *not* observe but also *cannot observe unless it wishes to dissolve itself entirely* [as a state].

But the matter is not settled so easily. What do those passages in the Gospel demand? Supernatural self-denial, submission to the authority of revelation, turning away from the state and the abolition of secular relationships. But the Christian state demands and accomplishes all these things. It has made the *spirit of the Gospel* its own, and if it does not reproduce it in the same words that the Gospel uses, this is because it is expressing that spirit in political forms, that is, in forms which are borrowed from the political system of this world but are

> reduced to mere appearances in the religious rebirth they are forced to undergo. This turning away from the state realizes itself through political forms.

Bauer goes on to show how the people in a Christian state are in fact a non-people with no will of their own and how their true existence resides in the ruler to whom they are subjected and who is, by origin and by nature, alien to them, i.e. given to them by God without their agreement. He also shows how the laws of this people are not their own creation but actual revelations; how the supreme ruler needs privileged intermediaries in his relations with the real people, with the masses; how the masses themselves disintegrate into a multitude of distinct spheres formed and determined by chance, differentiated by their interests, their particular passions and prejudices, and allowed as a privilege to seclude themselves from one another, etc.
But Bauer himself says:

> Politics, if it is to be nothing more than religion, can no longer be called politics, just as washing dishes, if it is to take on a religious significance, can no longer be called housework.

But in the Christian–Germanic state religion is an "economic matter" just as "economic matters" are religion. In the Christian–Germanic state the dominance of religion is the religion of dominance.

The separation of the "spirit of the Gospel" from the "letter of the Gospel" is an irreligious act. The state which allows the Gospel to speak in the language of politics or in any other language than the language of the Holy Ghost commits a sacrilegious act, if not in human eyes, then at least in its own religious eyes. The state which acknowledges Christianity as its supreme law and the *Bible* as its *charter* must be measured against the *words* of the Holy Scripture, for the Scripture is holy even in its words. This state, like the *human debris* upon which it is based, becomes involved in a painful contradiction, a contradiction which from the standpoint of religious consciousness is insuperable, when we refer it to those passages in the Gospel which it "not only does not observe but *also cannot observe unless it wishes to dissolve itself entirely as a state.*" And why does it not want to dissolve itself entirely? It is not capable of answering either others or itself on this point. In its *own consciousness* the official Christian state is an *ought* whose realization is impossible; it cannot convince itself of the *reality* of its own existence except through lies and therefore remains in its own eyes a perpetual object of doubt, an unreliable and problematic object. Criticism therefore has every justification in forcing the state which bases itself on the Bible into intellectual disarray in which it no longer knows whether it is *illusion* or *reality* and in which the infamy of its *secular* ends—for which religion serves as a cover—comes into irreconcilable conflict

with the integrity of its *religious* consciousness, which sees religion as the aim of the world. This state can free itself from its inner torment only by becoming the *bailiff* of the Catholic Church. In the face of this Church, which declares the secular power to be its servant, the state—the *secular* power which claims to rule over the religious spirit—is powerless.

In the so-called Christian state it is *estrangement* [*Entfremdung*] which carries weight, and not *man himself*. The only man who carries weight, the *king*, is specifically distinct from other men: he is still religious and is in direct communion with Heaven, with God. The relationships which prevail here are still relationships of *faith*. This means that the religious spirit is not yet truly secularized.

But the religious spirit can never be *truly* secularized, for what is it but the *unsecular* form of a stage in the development of the human spirit? The religious spirit can be realized only in so far as that stage in the development of the human spirit of which it is the religious expression emerges and constitutes itself in its *secular* form. This happens in the democratic state. Not Christianity but the human foundation of Christianity is the foundation of this state. Religion remains the ideal, unsecular consciousness of its members because it is the ideal form of the *stage of human development* which has been reached in this state.

The members of the political state are religious because of the dualism between individual life and species-life, between the life of civil society and political life. They are religious inasmuch as man considers political life, which is far removed from his actual individuality, to be his true life and inasmuch as religion is here the spirit of civil society and the expression of the separation and distance of man from man. Political democracy is Christian inasmuch as it regards man—not just one man but all men—as a *sovereign* and supreme being; but man in his uncultivated, unsocial aspect, man in his contingent existence, man just as he is, man as he has been corrupted, lost to himself, sold, and exposed to the rule of inhuman conditions and elements by the entire organization of our society—in a word, man who is not yet a *true* species-being. The sovereignty of man—but of man as an alien being distinct from actual man—is the fantasy, the dream, the postulate of Christianity, whereas in democracy it is a present and material reality, a secular maxim.

In a perfected democracy the religious and theological consciousness regards itself as all the more religious and all the more theological since it is apparently without any political significance or earthly aims, an unworldly and spiritual affair, an expression of the inadequacy of reason, the product of caprice and fantasy, an actualization of the life to come. Christianity here achieves the *practical* expression of its universal religious significance in that the most disparate outlooks come together in one group in the form of Chris-

tianity. Moreover, it demands of no one that he accept Christianity, but simply that he accept religion in general, any religion. The religious consciousness revels in a wealth of religious opposition and religious diversity.

We have therefore shown that political emancipation from religion allows religion—but not privileged religion—to continue in existence. The contradiction in which the adherent of a particular religion finds himself in relation to his citizenship is only *one aspect* of the general *secular contradiction between the political state and civil society.* The final form of the Christian state is one which recognizes itself as state and disregards the religion of its members. The emancipation of the state from religion is not the emancipation of actual man from religion.

Therefore we do not tell the Jews that they cannot be emancipated politically without radically emancipating themselves from Judaism, which is what Bauer tells them. We say instead: the fact that you can be politically emancipated without completely and absolutely renouncing Judaism shows that *political emancipation* by itself is not *human* emancipation. If you Jews want to be politically emancipated without emancipating yourselves as humans, the incompleteness and the contradiction lies not only in you but in the *nature* and the *category* of political emancipation. If you are ensnared within this category, then your experience is a universal one. In the same way as the state *evangelizes* when, although a state, it adopts the attitude of a Christian towards the Jew, the Jew *acts politically* when, although a Jew, he demands civil rights.

But if man, although a Jew, can be politically emancipated and acquire civil rights, can he claim and acquire the *rights of man*? In Bauer's view he cannot:

> The question is whether the Jew as such, i.e. the Jew who himself admits that he is compelled by his true nature to live in eternal separation from others, is capable of acquiring and granting to others the *universal rights of man.*
>
> The idea of the rights of man was not discovered in the Christian world until the last century. It is not innate in man. On the contrary, it can only be won in a struggle against the historical traditions in which man has up to now been educated. Therefore the rights of man are not a gift of nature or a legacy of previous history, but the prize of the struggle against the accident of birth and the privileges which history has handed down from generation to generation. They are the product of culture, and only he can possess them who has earned them and deserved them.
>
> But can the Jew really take possession of them? As long as he is a Jew the restricted nature that makes him a Jew will inevitably gain the ascendancy over the human nature which should join him as a man to other men; the effect will be to separate him from non-Jews. He declares through this separation that the particular nature which makes him a Jew is his true and highest nature in the face of which human nature is forced to yield.
>
> In the same way the Christian as Christian cannot grant the rights of man.

According to Bauer man must sacrifice the "*privilege of faith*" in order to be in a position to receive the universal rights of man. Let us consider for one moment these so-called rights of man. Let us consider them in their most authentic form—the form they have among those who *discovered* them, the North Americans and the French! These rights of man are partly *political* rights, rights which are only exercised in community with others. What constitutes their content is *participation* in the *community,* in the *political* community or *state.* They come under the category of *political freedom,* of *civil rights,* which as we have seen by no means presupposes the consistent and positive abolition of religion and therefore of Judaism. It remains for us to consider the other aspect, the *droits de l'homme* [rights of man] as distinct from the *droits du citoyen* [rights of the citizen].

Among them we find freedom of conscience, the right to practice one's chosen religion. The *privilege of faith* is expressly recognized, either as one of the *rights of man* or as a consequence of one of these rights, namely freedom.

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1791, Article 10: "No one is to be molested on account of his convictions, even his religious convictions." In Title 1 of the Constitution of 1791 the following is guaranteed as one of the rights of man: "the liberty of every man to practice the religion he professes."

The Declaration of the Rights of Man etc., 1793, counts among the rights of man, Article 7: "Liberty of worship." What is more, it even says, in connection with the right to publish views and opinions, to assemble and to practice religion, that "the need to enunciate these rights supposes either the presence or the recent memory of despotism." Compare the Constitution of 1795, Title XIV, Article 354.

Constitution of Pennsylvania, Article 9, §3: "All men have received from nature the imprescriptible *right* to worship the Almighty according to the dictates of their consciences and no one can of right be compelled to follow, to institute or to support against his will any religion or religious ministry. No human authority can under any circumstances whatsoever intervene in questions of conscience and control the powers of the soul."

Constitution of New Hampshire, Articles 5 and 6: "Among the natural rights, some are by their very nature inalienable because they cannot be replaced by anything equivalent. The *rights* of conscience are of this sort."

The incompatibility of religion with the rights of man is so alien to the concept of the rights of man that the *right to be religious*—to be religious in whatever way one chooses and to practice one's chosen religion—is expressly enumerated among the rights of man. The *privilege of faith* is a *universal right of man.*

The rights of man as *such* are distinguished from the rights of the citizen. Who is this man who is distinct from the citizen? None other than the *mem-*

ber of civil society. Why is the member of civil society simply called "man" and why are his rights called the rights of man? How can we explain this fact? By the relationship of the political state to civil society, by the nature of political emancipation.

The first point we should note is that the so-called *rights of man,* as distinct from the *rights of the citizen,* are quite simply the rights of the *member of civil society,* i.e. of egoistic man, of man separated from other men and from the community. Consider the most radical constitution, the Constitution of 1793:

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

Article 2. These rights (the natural and imprescriptible rights) are: equality, liberty, security, property.

What is liberty?

Article 6. "Liberty is the power which belongs to man to do anything that does not harm the rights of others," or according to the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1791: "Liberty consists in being able to do anything which does not harm others."

Liberty is therefore the right to do and perform everything which does not harm others. The limits within which each individual can move *without* harming others are determined by law, just as the boundary between two fields is determined by a stake. The liberty we are here dealing with is that of man as an isolated monad who is withdrawn into himself. Why does Bauer say that the Jew is incapable of acquiring the rights of man?

> "As long as he is a Jew the restricted nature which makes him a Jew will inevitably gain the ascendancy over the human nature which should join him as a man to other men; the effect will be to separate him from non-Jews."

But the right of man to freedom is not based on the association of man with man but rather on the separation of man from man. It is the *right* of this separation, the right of the *restricted* individual, restricted to himself.

The practical application of the right of man to freedom is the right of man to *private property.*

What is the right of man to private property?

Article 16 (Constitution of 1793): "The right of *property* is that right which belongs to each citizen to enjoy and dispose *at will* of his goods, his revenues and the fruit of his work and industry."

The right to private property is therefore the right to enjoy and dispose of one's resources as one wills, without regard for other men and independently of society: the right of self-interest. The individual freedom mentioned above,

together with this application of it, forms the foundation of civil society. It leads each man to see in other men not the *realization* but the *limitation* of his own freedom. But above all it proclaims the right of man "to enjoy and dispose *at will* of his goods, his revenues and the fruit of his work and industry."

There remain the other rights of man, equality and security.

Equality, here in its non-political sense, simply means equal access to liberty as described above, namely that each man is equally considered to be a self-sufficient monad. The Constitution of 1795 defines the concept of this equality, in keeping with this meaning, as follows:

Article 3 (Constitution of 1795): "Equality consists in the fact that the law is the same for everyone, whether it protects or whether it punishes."

And security?

Article 8 (Constitution of 1793): "Security consists in the protection accorded by society to each of its members for the conservation of his person, his rights and his property."

Security is the supreme social concept of civil society, the concept of *police,* the concept that the whole of society is there only to guarantee each of its members the conservation of his person, his rights, and his property. In this sense Hegel calls civil society "the state of need and of reason."

The concept of security does not enable civil society to rise above its egoism. On the contrary, security is the *guarantee* of its egoism.

Therefore not one of the so-called rights of man goes beyond egoistic man, man as a member of civil society, namely an individual withdrawn into himself, his private interest, and his private desires, and separated from the community. In the rights of man it is not man who appears as a species-being; on the contrary, species—life itself, society, appears as a framework extraneous to the individuals, as a limitation of their original independence. The only bond which holds them together is natural necessity, need and private interest, the conservation of their property, and their egoistic persons.

It is a curious thing that a people which is just beginning to free itself, to tear down all the barriers between the different sections of the people and to found a political community, that such a people should solemnly proclaim the rights of egoistic man, separated from his fellow men and from the community (Declaration of 1791), and even repeat this proclamation at a time when only the most heroic devotion can save the nation and is for that reason pressingly required, at a time when the sacrifice of all the interests of civil society becomes the order of the day and egoism must be punished as a crime. (*Declaration of the Rights of Man,* etc., 1793.) This fact appears even more curious when we observe that citizenship, the *political community,* is reduced by the political emancipators to a mere *means* for the conservation of these so-called

rights of man and that the citizen is therefore proclaimed the servant of egoistic man; that the sphere in which man behaves as a communal being [*Gemeinwesen*] is degraded to a level below the sphere in which he behaves as a partial being, and finally that it is man as *bourgeois*, i.e., as a member of civil society, and not man as citizen who is taken as the *real* and *authentic* man.

"The *goal* of all *political association* is the *conservation* of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man" (*Declaration of the Rights of Man* etc., 1791, Article 2). "*Government* is instituted in order to guarantee man the enjoyment of his natural and imprescriptible rights" (*Declaration* etc., 1793, Article 1).

Thus even during the ardor of its youth, urged on to new heights by the pressure of circumstances, political life declares itself to be a mere *means* whose goal is the life of civil society. True, revolutionary practice is in flagrant contradiction with its theory. While, for example, security is declared to be one of the rights of man, the violation of the privacy of letters openly becomes the order of the day. While the "*unlimited* freedom of the press" (Constitution of 1793, Article 122) is guaranteed as a consequence of the right to individual freedom, the freedom of the press is completely destroyed, for "the freedom of the press should not be permitted when it compromises public freedom." This therefore means that the right to freedom ceases to be a right as soon as it comes into conflict with *political* life, whereas in theory political life is simply the guarantee of the rights of man, the rights of individual man, and should be abandoned as soon as it contradicts its *goal*, these rights of man. But practice is only the exception and theory is the rule. Even if we were to assume that the relationship is properly expressed in revolutionary practice, the problem still remains to be solved as to why the relationship is set upon its head in the minds of the political emancipators so that the end appears as the means and the means as the end. This optical illusion present in their minds would continue to pose the same problem, though in a psychological and theoretical form.

But there is a straightforward solution.

Political emancipation is at the same time the *dissolution* of the old society on which there rested the power of the sovereign, the political system [*Staatswesen*] as estranged from the people. The political revolution is the revolution of civil society. What was the character of the old society? It can be characterized in one word: *feudalism*. The old civil society had a *directly political* character, i.e. the elements of civil life such as property, family, and the mode and manner of work were elevated in the form of seignory, estate, and guild to the level of elements of political life. In this form they defined the relationship of the single individual to the *state as a whole*, i.e. his *political* relationship, his relationship of separation and exclusion from the other components of society. For the feudal organization of the life of the people did not

elevate property or labor to the level of social elements but rather completed their *separation* from the state as a whole and constituted them as *separate* societies within society. But the functions and conditions of life in civil society were still political, even though political in the feudal sense, i.e. they excluded the individual from the state as a whole, they transformed the *particular* relationship of his guild to the whole state into his own general relationship to the life of the people, just as they transformed his specific civil activity and situation into his general activity and situation. As a consequence of this organization, the unity of the state, together with the consciousness, the will, and the activity of the unity of the state, the universal political power, likewise inevitably appears as the *special* concern of a ruler and his servants, separated from the people.

The political revolution which overthrew this rule and turned the affairs of the state into the affairs of the people, which constituted the political state as a concern of the whole people, i.e. as a real state, inevitably destroyed all the estates, corporations, guilds, and privileges which expressed the separation of the people from its community. The political revolution thereby *abolished* the *political character of civil society.* It shattered civil society into its simple components—on the one hand *individuals* and on the other the *material* and *spiritual elements* which constitute the vital content and civil situation of these individuals. It unleashed the political spirit which had, as it were, been dissolved, dissected, and dispersed in the various cul-de-sacs of feudal society; it gathered together this spirit from its state of dispersion, liberated it from the adulteration of civil life and constituted it as the sphere of the community, the *universal* concern of the people ideally independent of those *particular* elements of civil life. A person's *particular* activity and situation in life sank to the level of a purely individual significance. They no longer constituted the relationship of the individual to the state as a whole. Public affairs as such became the universal affair of each individual and the political function his universal function.

But the perfection of the idealism of the state was at the same time the perfection of the materialism of civil society. The shaking-off of the political yoke was at the same time the shaking-off of the bonds which had held in check the egoistic spirit of civil society. Political emancipation was at the same time the emancipation of civil society from politics, from even the *appearance* of a universal content.

Feudal society was dissolved into its foundation [*Grund*], into *man.* But into man as he really was its foundation—into *egoistic* man.

This *man,* the member of civil society, is now the foundation, the presupposition of the *political* state. In the rights of man the state acknowledges him as such.

But the freedom of egoistic man and the acknowledgement of this freedom is rather the acknowledgement of the *unbridled* movement of the spiritual and material elements which form the content of his life.

Hence man was not freed from religion—he received the freedom of religion. He was not freed from property—he received the freedom of property. He was not freed from the egoism of trade—he received the freedom to engage in trade.

The *constitution* of the *political state* and the dissolution of civil society into independent *individuals*—who are related by *law* just as men in the estates and guilds were related by *privilege*—are achieved in *one and the same act.* But man, as member of civil society, inevitably appears as *unpolitical* man, as *natural* man. The rights of man appear as natural rights, for *self-conscious activity* is concentrated upon the *political act.* Egoistic man is the *passive* and merely *given* result of the society which has been dissolved, an object of *immediate certainty,* and for that reason a *natural* object. The *political revolution* dissolves civil society into its component parts without *revolutionizing* these parts and subjecting them to criticism. It regards civil society, the world of needs, of labor, of private interests, and of civil law, as the *foundation of its existence,* as a *presupposition* which needs no further grounding, and therefore as its *natural basis.* Finally, man as he is a member of civil society is taken to be the *real* man, *man* as distinct from *citizen,* since he is man in his sensuous, individual, and *immediate* existence, whereas *political* man is simply abstract, artificial man, man as an *allegorical, moral* person. Actual man is acknowledged only in the form of the *egoistic* individual and *true* man only in the form of the *abstract citizen.*

Rousseau's description [in *The Social Contract*] of the abstraction of the political man is a good one:

> Whoever dares to undertake the founding of a people's institutions must feel himself capable of *changing,* so to speak, *human nature,* of *transforming* each individual, who in himself is a complete and solitary whole, into a *part* of a greater whole from which he somehow receives his life and his being, of substituting a *partial* and *moral existence* for physical and independent existence. He must take *man's own powers away from him* and substitute for them alien ones which he can only use with the assistance of others.

All emancipation is *reduction* of the human world and of relationships to *man himself.*

Political emancipation is the reduction of man on the one hand to the member of civil society, the *egoistic, independent* individual, and on the other to the *citizen,* the moral person.

Only when real, individual man resumes the abstract citizen into himself and as an individual man has become a *species-being* in his empirical life, his individual work and his individual relationships, only when man has recognized and organized his *forces propres* ["own forces"] as *social forces* so that social force is no longer separated from him in the form of *political* force, only then will human emancipation be completed.

Bruno Bauer, "The Capacity of Present-day Jews and Christians to Become Free," *Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz*, pp. 56–71

Bauer deals in this form with the relation between the *Jewish and Christian religions*, as well as their relation to criticism. Their relation to criticism is their relation "to the capacity to become free."

His conclusion is:

> The Christian has only one hurdle to overcome, namely, his religion, in order to dispense with religion altogether, and hence to become free. The Jew, on the other hand, does not only have to break with his Jewish nature; he also has to break with the development towards the completion of his religion, a development which has remained alien to him.

Thus Bauer here transforms the question of Jewish emancipation into a purely religious question. The theological problem as to who has the better chance of gaining salvation—Jew or Christian—is here repeated in a more enlightened form: who is the more *capable of emancipation*? The question is no longer: which gives freedom, Judaism or Christianity? Rather it is the reverse: which gives more freedom, the negation of Judaism or the negation of Christianity?

> If they wish to become free, the Jews should not embrace Christianity but Christianity in dissolution and more generally religion in dissolution, i.e. enlightenment, criticism, and its product—free humanity.

It is still a matter of *embracing a religion* for the Jew. It is no longer a question of Christianity, but of Christianity in dissolution.

Bauer demands of the Jew that he break with the essence of the Christian religion—a demand which, as he himself says, does not proceed from the development of the Jewish nature.

Since Bauer, at the end of his *Jewish Question*, represented Judaism as nothing more than a crude religious criticism of Christianity, and therefore gave it "only" a religious significance, it was clear in advance that he would also transform the emancipation of the Jews into a philosophico-theological act.

Bauer sees the *ideal* and abstract essence of the Jew, his *religion*, as his *whole* essence. He is therefore right to conclude: "The Jew gives nothing to humanity when he lays aside his limited law," when he abolishes all his Judaism.

According to this the relationship of Jews and Christians is as follows: the only interest Christians have in the emancipation of the Jews is a general human and *theoretical* interest. Judaism is an offensive fact for the religious eye of the Christian. As soon as his eye ceases to be religious, this fact ceases to be offensive. The emancipation of the Jews is in and for itself not the task of the Christian.

However, if the Jew wants to liberate himself, he has to complete not only his own task but also the task of the Christian—the *Critique of the Evangelical History of the Synoptics* [by Bruno Bauer] and the *Life of Jesus*, etc.[by David Friedrich Strauss].

"They must see to it themselves: they will determine their own destiny; but history does not allow itself to be mocked."

We will try to avoid looking at the problem in a theological way. For us the question of the Jews' capacity for emancipation is transformed into the question: what specific *social* element must be overcome in order to abolish Judaism? For the capacity of the present-day Jew for emancipation is the relation of Judaism to the emancipation of the present-day world. This relation flows inevitably from the special position of Judaism in the enslaved world of today.

Let us consider the real secular Jew—not the *sabbath Jew*, as Bauer does, but the *everyday Jew*.

Let us not look for the Jew's secret in his religion: rather let us look for the secret of religion in the real Jew.

What is the secular basis of Judaism? *Practical* need, self-interest.

What is the secular cult of the Jew? *Haggling*. What is his secular God? *Money*.

Well then! Emancipation from *haggling* and from *money*, i.e. from practical, real Judaism, would be the same as the self-emancipation of our age.

An organization of society that abolished the basis upon which haggling exists, i.e. the possibility of haggling, would have made the Jew impossible. His religious consciousness would vanish like an insipid haze in the vital air of society. On the other hand, when the Jew recognizes this his *practical* nature as null and works to abolish it, he is working outwards from his previous course of development in the direction of general *human emancipation* and turning against the *supreme practical* expression of human self-estrangement.

We therefore recognize in Judaism the presence of a universal and *contemporary anti-social* element whose historical evolution—eagerly nurtured by

the Jews in its harmful aspects—has arrived at its present peak, a peak at which it will inevitably disintegrate.

The *emancipation of the Jews* is, in the last analysis, the emancipation of mankind from *Judaism.*

The Jew has already emancipated himself in a Jewish way.

> The Jew, who is merely tolerated in Vienna, for example, determines the fate of the whole empire through the financial power he possesses. The Jew, who can be without rights in the smallest of the German states, decides the fate of Europe. While the corporations and the guilds exclude him or are not yet willing to look upon him with favor, the audacity of his industry mocks the obstinacy of medieval institutions.

This is not an isolated fact. The Jew has emancipated himself in a Jewish way not only by acquiring financial power but also because through him and apart from him *money* has become a world power and the practical Jewish spirit has become the practical spirit of the Christian peoples. The Jews have emancipated themselves in so far as the Christians have become Jews.

For example, Captain Hamilton informs us that the pious and politically free inhabitant of New England is a kind of Laocoön who does not make even the slightest effort to free himself from the snakes that are choking him. *Mammon* is his idol and he prays to him not only with his lips but with all the power of his body and his soul. For him the world is nothing but a Stock Exchange and he is convinced that his sole vocation here on earth is to get richer than his neighbors. He is possessed by the spirit of bargaining and the only way he can relax is by exchanging objects. When he travels it is as if he carried his shop and office on his back and spoke of nothing but interest and profit. If he takes his eyes off his own business for a moment, it is simply so that he can poke his nose into someone else's.

Indeed, the practical domination of Judaism over the Christian world is expressed in such an unambiguous and natural fashion in North America that the very *proclamation of the Gospel,* Christian teaching, has become a commercial object and the bankrupt businessman is just as likely to go into evangelizing as the successful evangelist into business.

"The man you see at the head of a respectable congregation started out as a businessman; his business failed so he became a minister; the other started out as a priest, but as soon as he had saved some money he left the pulpit for business. In many people's eyes the religious ministry is a veritable industrial career."

In Bauer's view it is "a dishonest state of affairs when in theory the Jew is deprived of political rights while in practice he possesses enormous power

and exercises a political influence in the larger sphere that is denied him as an individual."

The contradiction between the practical political power of the Jew and his political rights is the contradiction between politics and financial power in general. Ideally speaking the former is superior to the latter, but in actual fact it is in thrall to it.

Judaism has kept going *alongside* Christianity not simply as a religious critique of Christianity and an embodiment of doubts about the religious origins of Christianity but also because the practical Jewish spirit, Judaism, has managed to survive in Christian society and has even reached its highest level of development there. The Jew, who is a particular member of civil society, is only the particular manifestation of the Judaism of civil society.

Judaism has managed to survive not despite history but through it.

Civil society ceaselessly begets the Jew from its own entrails.

What was the essential basis of the Jewish religion? Practical need, egoism.

The monotheism of the Jew is therefore in reality the polytheism of the many needs, a polytheism that makes even the lavatory an object of divine law. *Practical need, egoism,* is the principle of *civil society* and appears as such in all its purity as soon as civil society has fully brought forth the political state. The god of *practical need and self-interest* is *money.*

Money is the jealous god of Israel before whom no other god may stand. Money debases all the gods of mankind and turns them into commodities. Money is the universal and self-constituted *value* of all things. It has therefore deprived the entire world—both the world of man and of nature—of its specific value. Money is the estranged essence of man's work and existence; this alien essence dominates him and he worships it.

The god of the Jews has been secularized and become the god of the world. Exchange is the true god of the Jew. His god is nothing more than illusory exchange.

The view of nature which has grown up under the regime of private property and of money is an actual contempt for and practical degradation of nature which does exist in the Jewish religion but only in an imaginary form.

In this sense Thomas Münzer declares it intolerable that "all creatures have been made into property, the fish in the water, the birds in the air, the plants on the earth—all living things must also become free."

What is present in an abstract form in the Jewish religion—contempt for theory, for art, for history, for man as an end in himself—is the *actual* and *conscious* standpoint, the virtue, of the man of money. The species-relation itself, the relation between man and woman, etc., becomes a commercial object! Woman is put on the market.

The *chimerical* nationality of the Jew is the nationality of the merchant, of the man of money in general.

The ungrounded and unfounded law of the Jew is only the religious caricature of ungrounded and unfounded morality and law in general, of the purely *formal* rites with which the world of self-interest surrounds itself.

Here too the supreme relation of man is the *legal* relation, the relation to laws which apply to him not because they are the laws of his own will and nature but because they *dominate* him and because breaches of them would be *avenged.*

Jewish Jesuitry, the same practical Jesuitry that Bauer finds in the Talmud, is the relationship of the world of self-interest to the laws that dominate it; the wily circumvention of those laws constitutes the principal skill of that world.

Indeed, the motion of that world within its laws is necessarily a continual supersession [*Aufhebung*] of the law.

Judaism could not develop further as a *religion,* could not develop further theoretically, because the world-view of practical need is by nature narrow-minded and rapidly exhausted.

The religion of practical need could not by its very nature find its completion in theory but only in *practice,* precisely because its truth is practice.

Judaism could not create a new world; it could only draw the new creations and conditions of the world into the province of its own activity, since practical need, whose understanding is only at the level of self-interest, is passive and incapable of extending itself in directions of its own choosing; instead, it *finds* itself extended in line with the development of social conditions themselves.

Judaism reaches its peak with the completion of civil society; but civil society first reaches its completion in the *Christian* world. Only under the rule of Christianity, which makes *all* national, natural, moral, and theoretical relationships *external* to man, could civil society separate itself completely from political life, tear apart all the species-bonds of man, substitute egoism and selfish need for those bonds, and dissolve the human world into a world of atomistic individuals confronting each other in enmity.

Christianity sprang from Judaism. It has now dissolved back into Judaism.

The Christian was from the very beginning the theorizing Jew. The Jew is therefore the practical Christian and the practical Christian has once again become a Jew.

Christianity overcame real Judaism only in appearance. It was too *refined,* too spiritual, to do away with the crudeness of practical need except by raising it into celestial space.

Christianity is the sublime thought of Judaism and Judaism is the vulgar application of Christianity. But this application could not become universal until Christianity as perfected religion had *theoretically* completed the self-estrangement of man from himself and from nature.

Only then could Judaism attain universal domination and turn alienated man and alienated nature into *alienable*, saleable objects subject to the slavery of egoistic need and to the market.

Selling is the practice of alienation [*Die Veräusserung ist die Praxis der Entäusserung*]. As long as man is restrained by religion he can objectify his essence only by making it into an *alien*, fantastic being. In the same way, when under the sway of egoistic need he can act practically and practically produce objects only by making his products and his activity subordinate to an alien substance and giving them the significance of an alien substance—money.

Translated into practice, the Christian egoism of eternal happiness inevitably becomes the material egoism of the Jew, celestial need becomes terrestrial need, and subjectivism becomes self-interest. We can explain the tenacity of the Jew not from his religion but from the human foundation of his religion, from practical need and egoism.

Since the real essence of the Jew is universally realized and secularized in civil society, civil society could not convince the Jew of the *unreality* of his *religious* essence, which is nothing more than the ideal expression of practical need. Therefore not only in the Pentateuch and the Talmud but also in present-day society we find the essence of the modern Jew not in an abstract but in a supremely empirical form, not only as the narrowness of the Jew but as the Jewish narrowness of society.

As soon as society succeeds in abolishing the *empirical* essence of Judaism—the market and the conditions which give rise to it—the Jew will have become *impossible*, for his consciousness will no longer have an object, the subjective basis of Judaism—practical need—will have become humanized, and the conflict between man's individual sensuous existence and his species-existence will have been superseded.

The *social* emancipation of the Jew is the *emancipation of society from Judaism*.

PART II

Consciousness and the Material World

Like many other living things we humans are conscious beings. But human consciousness is characterized by a high degree of self-reflexivity, an intense self-awareness. Marx put it this way: "Man is not only a natural being, he is a human *natural being. That is, he is a being for himself and hence a* species-being*; as such he must confirm and express himself as much in history as in his knowing."*[1]

This claim that we, as a species, are characterized not simply by thought but by thought-in-action *will be crucial. And there is more. Like other living things, in order to live we must be in constant contact with the material world around us. We must breathe and eat and drink. Besides being conscious creatures, we are necessarily and always sensuous and tactile. Our* human *life activity—our way of subsisting—is both sensuous and self-reflexive. And that is what Marx means by "productivity": "Man can be distinguished from the animal by consciousness, religion, or anything else you please. He begins to distinguish himself from the animal the moment he begins to* produce *his means of subsistence."*[2]

That reality is displayed by the fact that we humans make and use tools. The tool expresses our active, conscious, purposive way of subsisting–and the tool also connects *us to the material world. The tool symbolizes consciousness and sensuousness in dialectical relationship. Like other animals, we began our journey as*

hunters and gatherers. But we hunted with a spear or dug for roots with a stick. We relate to the givenness of the material world upon which we depend not passively (adjusting to it) but actively; we transform the world through our work with tools. And in transforming the world around us we transform our awareness *of that world. Consciousness is always consciousness of something that is not itself. It is an "in itself" thrown back upon itself that then becomes a "for itself"—and thus aware of itself. It is not "in the mind" but in this conscious-sensuous-tactile space that ideas take shape and find a place. Marx:*

> Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., but these are real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces . . . Consciousness can never be anything else except conscious existence, and the existence of men in their actual life-process.[3]

In saying that, Marx sets himself apart from the idealism of Hegel for whom consciousness-as-such, an awareness aware of itself, is the ultimate. For Hegel, the highest form of human activity, of human freedom, is distanced from the world; it is critical consciousness pulling back into itself. At the same time Marx also distinguishes himself from the materialism of Feuerbach, and what Marx found to be Feuerbach's passive, merely contemplative relation to the material world, where "sensuousness is conceived only in the form of the object *or* perception, *but not as* sensuous human activity, practice *[Praxis]." Marx continues, "Feuerbach, not satisfied with* abstract thinking *[as in Hegel], wants* contemplation*; but he does not comprehend sensuousness as* practical, *human-sensuous activity."[4] To be human is to be productive. It is to have and express conscious, sensuous life activity, to transform the world and "to see ourselves in a world we have made."*

This complaint against philosophers like Hegel and Feuerbach is at the same moment a complaint against religion. Religion arises out of our active, conscious species-being. It is an act of protest, an act of opposition to all that degrades and denies us. Religion, for Marx, is both a suffering and a crying out against that suffering. This is what he saw in the religious devotion of the German working class and poor. But religion, Marx thought, resolves itself into a mere explanation *of that suffering (a dogma) or a mere religious* ritual *(a practice) that makes that suffering* sufferable. *Like an opiate, it covers over the suffering without actually removing it. In this respect, Marx was far closer than he realized to the complaint brought against religion by the Hebrew prophets who railed against the establishment devotion to temple ritual by the priests, who sought security and comfort in pious practices rather than in the struggle for justice.*

Indeed, for Marx struggle *is at the heart of the human enterprise. As conscious, self-reflexive creatures, we are destined to struggle, destined to alienation, and to struggle to overcome alienation. Here Marx follows Hegel closely. We "alienate" our-*

selves: We put ourselves into the world through our work, but then we must struggle against the givenness of that already established world. We must negate it as an object *that confronts us and seems finished and closed. By "alienation" Hegel and Marx mean not a subjective feeling but an objective* relationship *to the world. Here is a quote from Marx on what he and Hegel have in common. It is very tightly worded, but in a word it says it all.*

> The importance of Hegel's *Phenomenology* and its final result—the dialectic of negativity as the moving and producing principle—lies in the fact that Hegel conceives the self-creation of man as a process, objectification as loss of object [*Entgegenstandlichung*], as alienation and as supersession of this alienation; that he therefore grasps the nature of *labor* and conceives objective man—true, because real man—as the result of his *own labor.*[5]

Through our labor, our conscious life activity, we humans are constantly transforming the world upon which we depend for our subsistence. We pour ourselves out into that world; we alienate *ourselves from ourselves; through our work we build ourselves into the objective world. But then we must negate that alienation and reassert our own active relationship to the world. In this process of alienation and of supersession we transform not only the world around us but we transform ourselves—our thoughts, our conceptions, and how we concretely live in that world with others. For Marx this puts human work at the very center of our way of being as human creatures.*

Still, as workers, we almost never experience our work as life-creating and life-transforming. Instead, we are forced to "go to work" to "make a living." We compete with other workers to make a wage. In order to live we must buy back what as workers we have made. We never feel at home when we are at work, and only feel at home when we are not at work. We are estranged from our species being. Marx:

> The more the worker exerts himself in his work, the more powerful the alien, objective world becomes which he brings into being over against himself, the poorer he and his inner world become, and the less they belong to him. It is the same in religion. The more man puts into God, the less he retains within himself. The worker places his life in the object; but now it no longer belongs to him, but to the object . . . and begins to confront him as an autonomous power.[6]

What workers must do, therefore, is struggle to take back into their own control the means of production, and in so doing enter consciously into their conscious, engaged, and sensuous life activity.

Having reached that conclusion Marx will thenceforth turn his attention away from philosophy and away from religion, and focus his analysis upon political economy—its institutions and justifying ideologies. The purpose of human life is not

to understand but to understand in order to change, *because change is what through our work we are in fact constantly doing. And what we are changing is ultimately ourselves as a still evolving and unfinished species.*

The writings of Marx in this section reflect his fundamental view of our human species and of our species-specific way of dwelling on Earth. He arrives at this position in dialogue with both Hegel and Feuerbach. In distinguishing himself from their views and asserting the dialectical relationship of consciousness and sensuousness in human life activity, Marx also establishes his criticism of religion as a false or inverted consciousness. Marx puts it this way:

> In direct contrast to German philosophy, which descends from heaven to earth, here one ascends from earth to heaven. . . . To arrive at man in the flesh, one does not set out from what men say, imagine, or conceive. . . . Rather one sets out from real, active men and their actual life process.[7]

In saying this, Marx shows that besides Hegel and Feuerbach there is another important interpreter of the story of life on Earth with whom he is in direct conversation, and that is Charles Darwin. Darwin saw that all life has evolved and is evolving from simple to ever more diverse and complex life forms, and that process has been driven by vast struggle. Marx hoped and believed he had solved the second puzzle—of how human life-in-society had evolved and changed over time. And in this social evolution it is human labor, not Nature and Natural Selection, that is the driving force. That is why this section on "Consciousness and the Material World" will be followed by a section called "Bad Work/Good Work." For Marx, we humans misunderstand our work when we say we "go to work." We are instead the unfinished and still evolving product of our work.

Notes

1. "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy," p. 84.
2. "The German Ideology—Ideology in General," p. 95.
3. Ibid., p. 99.
4. "Concerning Feuerbach," p. 183.
5. "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy," p. 80.
6. "Estranged Labor," p. 119.
7. "The German Ideology—Ideology in General," p. 100.

"CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S DIALECTIC AND GENERAL PHILOSOPHY" (1844)

With his writing of this essay Marx establishes his dialectical materialism by distinguishing it from Hegel and Feuerbach, even as he borrows from both. Against Hegelian idealism he asserts Feuerbach's emphasis upon the human as sensuous, material, and tactile. But he accuses Feuerbach of an abstract individualism and turns again to Hegel's grasp upon the human as a social and historical being. In this essay Marx comes to his full understanding of the nature and meaning of human labor, *namely that we humans (as a still evolving species) are the final product of our work. We also find Marx introducing the notion of "suffering" and struggle, themes he will return to in his criticism of religion.*

This is perhaps the place to make a few remarks, by way of explanation and justification, about the Hegelian dialectic, both in general, and in particular as expounded in the *Phenomenology* and *Logic*, as well as about its relation to the modern critical movement.

Modern German criticism was so preoccupied with the old world and so entangled during the course of its development with its subject-matter that it had a completely uncritical attitude to the method of criticism and was completely unaware of the *seemingly formal* but in fact *essential* question of how we now stand in relation to the Hegelian *dialectic*. The lack of awareness about the relation of modern criticism to Hegelian philosophy in general and to the dialectic in particular has been so pronounced that critics like Strauss and Bruno Bauer are still, at least implicitly, imprisoned within Hegelian logic, the first completely so and the second in his *Synoptiker* (where, in opposition to Strauss, he substitutes the "self-consciousness" of abstract man for the substance of abstract nature) and even in his *Das entdeckte Christentum*. For example, in *Das entdeckte Christentum* we find the following passage:

> As if self-consciousness, in positing the world, that which is different, and in producing itself in that which it produces, since it then does away with the difference between what it has produced and itself and since it is only in the producing and in the movement that it is itself—as if it did not have its purpose in this movement,

etc. Or again:

> They (the French Materialists) could not yet see that the movement of the universe only really comes to exist for itself and enters into unity with itself as the movement of self-consciousness.

These expressions are not even different in their language from the Hegelian conception. They reproduce it word for word.

How little awareness there was of the relation to Hegel's dialectic while this criticism was under way (Bauer's *Synoptiker*), and how little even the completed criticism of the subject-matter contributed to such an awareness, is clear from Bauer's *Gute Sache der Freiheit,* where he dismisses Herr Gruppe's impertinent question "and now what will happen to logic?" by referring him to future Critics.

But now that Feuerbach, both in his "Thesen" in the *Anekdota* and in greater detail in his *Philosophie der Zukunft,* has destroyed the foundations of the old dialectic and philosophy, that very school of Criticism, which was itself incapable of taking such a step but instead watched while it was taken, has proclaimed itself the pure, resolute, absolute Criticism which has achieved self-clarity, and in its spiritual pride has reduced the whole process of history to the relation between the rest of the world, which comes into the category of the "masses," and itself. It has assimilated all dogmatic antitheses into the *one* dogmatic antithesis between its own sagacity and the stupidity of the world, between the critical Christ and mankind—the "*rabble.*" It has daily and hourly demonstrated its own excellence against the mindlessness of the masses and has finally announced that the critical *Day of Judgement* is drawing near, when the whole of fallen humanity will be arrayed before it and divided into groups, whereupon each group will receive its certificate of poverty. The school of Criticism has made known in print its superiority to human feelings and the world, above which it sits enthroned in sublime solitude, with nothing but an occasional roar of sarcastic laughter from its Olympian lips. After all these delightful capers of idealism (Young Hegelianism) which is expiring in the form of Criticism, it (the critical school) has not once voiced so much as a suspicion of the need for a critical debate with its progenitor, the Hegelian dialectic. It has not even indicated a critical attitude to Feuerbach's dialectic. A completely uncritical attitude towards itself.

Feuerbach is the only person who has a *serious* and a *critical* attitude to the Hegelian dialectic and who has made real discoveries in this field. He is the true conqueror of the old philosophy. The magnitude of his achievement and the quiet simplicity with which he presents it to the world are in marked contrast to the others.

Feuerbach's great achievement is:

(1) To have shown that philosophy is nothing more than religion brought into thought and developed in thought, and that it is equally to be condemned as another form and mode of existence of the estrangement of man's nature.

(2) To have founded *true materialism* and *real science* by making the social relation of "man to man" the basic principle of his theory.

(3) To have opposed to the negation of the negation, which claims to be the absolute positive, the positive which is based upon itself and positively grounded in itself.

Feuerbach explains the Hegelian dialectic, and in so doing justifies taking the positive, that is sensuously ascertained, as his starting-point, in the following way:

Hegel starts out from the estrangement of substance (in logical terms: from the infinite, the abstractly universal), from the absolute and fixed abstraction. In ordinary language, he starts out from religion and theology.

Secondly, he supersedes the infinite and posits the actual, the sensuous, the real, the finite, the particular. (Philosophy as supersession of religion and theology.)

Thirdly, he once more supersedes the positive, and restores the abstraction, the infinite. Restoration of religion and theology.

Feuerbach therefore conceives the negation of the negation *only* as a contradiction of philosophy with itself, as philosophy which affirms theology (supersession, etc.) after having superseded it and hence affirms it in opposition to itself.

The positing or self-affirmation and self-confirmation present in the negation of the negation is regarded as a positing which is not yet sure of itself, which is still preoccupied with its opposite, which doubts itself and therefore stands in need of proof, which does not prove itself through its own existence, which is not admitted. It is therefore directly counterposed to that positing which is sensuously ascertained and grounded in itself. (Feuerbach sees negation of the negation, the concrete concept, as thought which surpasses itself in thought and as thought which strives to be direct awareness, nature, reality.)

But since he conceives the negation of the negation from the aspect of the positive relation contained within it as the true and only positive and from the aspect of the negative relation contained within it as the only true act and self-realizing act of all being, Hegel has merely discovered the *abstract, logical, speculative* expression of the movement of history. This movement of history is not yet the *real* history of man as a given subject, it is simply the *process of his creation,* the *history of his emergence.* We shall explain both the abstract form of this movement and the difference between Hegel's conception of this process and that of modern criticism as formulated in Feuerbach's *Das Wesen des Christentums* or rather, the *critical* form of a movement which in Hegel is still uncritical.

Let us take a look at Hegel's system. We must begin with his *Phenomenology,* which is the true birthplace and secret of the Hegelian philosophy.

Phenomenology

A. *Self-consciousness*

I. *Consciousness.* (a) Certainty in sense experience, or the "this" and *meaning.* (b) *Perception* or the thing with its properties and *illusion.* (c) Power and understanding, phenomena and the super-sensible world.

II. *Self-consciousness.* The truth of certainty of oneself. (a) Independence and dependence of self-consciousness, lordship and servitude. (b) Freedom of self-consciousness. Stoicism, scepticism, the unhappy consciousness.

III. *Reason.* Certainty and truth of reason. (a) Observational reason; observation of nature and of self-consciousness, (b) Realization of rational self-consciousness through itself. Pleasure and necessity. The law of the heart and the madness of self-conceit. Virtue and the way of the world. (c) Individuality which is real in and for itself. The spiritual animal kingdom and deception or the thing itself. Legislative reason. Reason which tests laws.

B. *Mind.*

I. *True* mind, morality.

II. Self-estranged mind, culture.

III. Mind certain of itself, morality.

C. *Religion.*

Natural religion, the *religion of art, revealed* religion.

D. *Absolute knowledge*

Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* begins with logic, with *pure speculative thought,* and ends with *absolute knowledge,* with the self-conscious, self-comprehending philosophical or absolute mind, i.e. super-human, abstract mind. In the same way, the whole of the *Encyclopaedia* is nothing but the *extended being* of philosophical mind, its self-objectification; and the philosophical mind is nothing but the estranged mind of the world thinking within its self-estrangement, i.e. conceiving itself abstractly. *Logic* is the *currency* of the mind, the speculative *thought-value* of man and of nature, their essence which has become completely indifferent to all real determinateness and hence unreal, *alienated* thought, and therefore thought which abstracts from nature and from real man; *abstract* thought. The *external character of this abstract thought . . . nature* as it is for this abstract thought. Nature is external to it, its loss of self; it grasps nature externally, as abstract thought, but as alienated abstract thought. Finally *mind,* which is thought returning to its birthplace and which as anthropolog-

ical, phenomenological, psychological, moral, artistic-religious mind is not valid for itself until it finally discovers and affirms itself as *absolute* knowledge and therefore as absolute, i.e. abstract mind, receives its conscious and appropriate existence. For its real existence is *abstraction.*

Hegel commits a double error.

The first appears most clearly in the *Phenomenology,* which is the birthplace of Hegelian philosophy. When, for example, Hegel conceives wealth, the power of the state, etc., as entities estranged from the being of man, he conceives them only in their thought form . . . They are entities of thought, and therefore simply an estrangement of *pure,* i.e. abstract, philosophical thought. Therefore the entire movement ends with absolute knowledge. What these objects are estranged from and what they confront with their claim to reality is none other than abstract thought. The *philosopher,* himself an abstract form of estranged man, sets himself up as the *yardstick* of the estranged world. The entire *history of alienation* and the entire *retraction* of this alienation is therefore nothing more than the *history of the production* of abstract, i.e. absolute, thought, of logical, speculative thought. *Estrangement,* which thus forms the real interest of this alienation and its supersession, is the opposition of *in itself* and *for itself,* of *consciousness* and *self consciousness,* of *object* and *subject,* i.e. the opposition within thought itself of abstract thought and sensuous reality or real sensuousness. All other oppositions and the movements of these oppositions are only the *appearance,* the *mask,* the *exoteric* form of these two opposites which are alone important and which form the *meaning* of these other, profane oppositions. It is not the fact that the human essence *objectifies* itself in an *inhuman* way, in opposition to itself, but that it *objectifies* itself in *distinction* from and in *opposition* to abstract thought, which constitutes the essence of estrangement as it exists and as it is to be superseded.

The appropriation of man's objectified and estranged essential powers is therefore firstly only an *appropriation* which takes place in *consciousness,* in pure thought, i.e. in *abstraction.* In the *Phenomenology,* therefore, despite its thoroughly negative and critical appearance and despite the fact that its criticism is genuine and often well ahead of its time, the uncritical positivism and equally uncritical idealism of Hegel's later works, the philosophical dissolution and restoration of the empirical world, is already to be found in latent form, in embryo, as a potentiality and a secret. Secondly, the vindication of the objective world for man—e.g. the recognition that *sensuous* consciousness is not *abstractly* sensuous consciousness, but *humanly* sensuous consciousness; that religion, wealth, etc., are only the estranged reality of *human* objectification, of *human* essential powers born into work, and therefore only the *way* to true *human* reality—this appropriation, or the insight into this process,

therefore appears in Hegel in such a way that *sense perception, religion,* the power of the state, etc., are spiritual entities, for *mind* alone is the *true* essence of man, and the true form of mind is the thinking mind, the logical, speculative mind. The *humanity* of nature and of nature as produced by history, of man's products, is apparent from the fact that they are *products* of abstract mind and therefore factors of the *mind, entities of thought.* The *Phenomenology* is therefore concealed and mystifying criticism, criticism which has not attained self-clarity; but in so far as it grasps the *estrangement* of man—even though man appears only in the form of mind—*all* the elements of criticism are concealed within it, and often *prepared* and *worked out* in a way that goes far beyond Hegel's own point of view. The "unhappy consciousness," the "honest consciousness," the struggle of the "noble and base consciousness," etc. etc., these separate sections contain the *critical* elements—but still in estranged form—of entire spheres, such as religion, the state, civil life, and so forth. Just as the *entity,* the *object,* appears as a thought-entity, so also the *subject* is always *consciousness* or *self-consciousness*; or rather, the object appears only as *abstract* consciousness and man only as *self-consciousness.* The various forms of estrangement which occur are therefore merely different forms of consciousness and self-consciousness. Since abstract consciousness, which is how the object is conceived, is *in itself* only one moment in the differentiation of self-consciousness, the result of the movement is the identity of self-consciousness and consciousness, absolute knowledge, the movement of abstract thought no longer directed outwards but proceeding only within itself; i.e., the result is the dialectic of pure thought.

The importance of Hegel's *Phenomenology* and its final result—the dialectic of negativity as the moving and producing principle—lies in the fact that Hegel conceives the self-creation of man as a process, objectification as loss of object [*Entgegenständlichung*], as alienation and as supersession of this alienation; that he therefore grasps the nature of *labor* and conceives objective man—true, because real man—as the result of his *own labor.* The *real, active* relation of man to himself as a species-being, or the realization of himself as a real species-being, i.e. as a human being, is only possible if he really employs all his *species-powers*—which again is only possible through the cooperation of mankind and as a result of history—and treats them as objects, which is at first only possible in the form of estrangement.

We shall now demonstrate in detail the one-sidedness and the limitations of Hegel, as observed in the closing chapter of the *Phenomenology.* This chapter ("Absolute Knowledge") contains the concentrated essence of the *Phenomenology,* its relation to the dialectic, and Hegel's *consciousness* of both and their interrelations.

For the present, let us observe that Hegel adopts the standpoint of modern political economy. He sees *labor* as the *essence*, the self-confirming essence, of man; he sees only the positive and not the negative side of labor. Labor is *man's coming to be for himself* within *alienation* or as an *alienated man*. The only labor Hegel knows and recognizes is *abstract mental* labor. So that which above all constitutes the *essence* of philosophy—the *alienation of man who knows himself* or *alienated* science that *thinks* itself—Hegel grasps as its essence, and is therefore able to bring together the separate elements of previous philosophies and present his philosophy as *the* philosophy. What other philosophers did—that they conceived separate moments of nature and of man's life as moments of self-consciousness, indeed, of abstract self-consciousness—this Hegel *knows* by *doing* philosophy. Therefore his science is absolute.

Let us now proceed to our subject.

"Absolute Knowledge": The last chapter of the Phenomenology

The main point is that the *object* of *consciousness* is nothing else but *self-consciousness*, or that the object is only *objectified self-consciousness*, self-consciousness as object. (The positing of man = self-consciousness.)

It is therefore a question of surmounting the *object of consciousness*. *Objectivity* as such is seen as an *estranged* human relationship which does not correspond to *human nature*, to self-consciousness. The *reappropriation* of the objective essence of man, produced in the form of estrangement as something alien, therefore means transcending not only *estrangement* but also *objectivity*. That is to say, man is regarded as a *non-objective, spiritual* being.

Hegel describes the process of *surmounting the object of consciousness* in the following way:

The *object* does not only show itself as *returning* into the *self*, (according to Hegel that is a *one-sided* conception of the movement, a conception which grasps only one side). Man is equated with self. But the self is only *abstractly* conceived man, man produced by abstraction. Man is self [*selbstisch*]. His eyes, his ears, etc., have the *quality of self*; each one of his essential powers has this quality of *self*. But therefore it is quite wrong to say that *self-consciousness* has eyes, ears, essential powers. *Self-consciousness* is rather a quality of human nature, of the human eye, etc.; human nature is not a quality of *self-consciousness*.

The self abstracted and fixed for itself is man as *abstract egoist, egoism* raised to its pure abstraction in thought. (We shall come back to this later.)

For Hegel *human nature, man,* is equivalent to *self-consciousness*. All estrangement of human nature is therefore *nothing* but *estrangement of self-consciousness*. Hegel regards the estrangement of self-consciousness not as the *expression*,

reflected in knowledge and in thought, of the *real* estrangement of human nature. On the contrary, *actual* estrangement, estrangement which appears real, is in its innermost hidden nature—which philosophy first brings to light—nothing more than the *appearance* of the estrangement of real human nature, of *self-consciousness*. The science which comprehends this is therefore called *phenomenology*. All reappropriation of estranged objective being therefore appears as an incorporation into self-consciousness; the man who takes hold of his being is *only* the self-consciousness which takes hold of objective being. The return of the object into the self is therefore the reappropriation of the object.

Expressed *comprehensively*, the *surmounting of the object of consciousness* means:

(1) That the object as such presents itself to consciousness as something disappearing.

(2) That it is the alienation of self-consciousness which establishes thingness [*Dingheit*].

(3) That this alienation has not only a *negative* but also a *positive* significance.

(4) That this significance is not only *for us* or in itself, but *for self-consciousness itself*.

(5) *For self-consciousness* the negative of the object, its own supersession of itself, has a *positive* significance—or self-consciousness *knows* the nullity of the object—in that self-consciousness alienates itself, for in this alienation it establishes *itself* as object or establishes the object as itself, for the sake of the indivisible unity of *being-for-itself*.

(6) On the other hand, this other moment is also present in the process, namely, that self-consciousness has superseded and taken back into itself this alienation and objectivity, and is therefore *at home* in *its* other-being *as such*.

(7) This is the movement of *consciousness*, and consciousness is therefore the totality of its moments.

(8) Similarly, consciousness must have related itself to the object in terms of the totality of its determinations, and have grasped it in terms of each of them. This totality of determinations makes the object *intrinsically* [*an sich*] a *spiritual being*, and it becomes that in reality for consciousness through the apprehending of each one of these determinations as determinations of *self* or through what we earlier called the spiritual attitude towards them.

ad (1) That the object as such presents itself to consciousness as something disappearing is the above-mentioned *return of the object into the self*.

ad (2) The *alienation of self-consciousness* establishes *thingness*. Because man is equivalent to self-consciousness, his alienated objective being or *thingness* (that which is an *object for him*, and the only true object for him is that which

is an essential object, i.e. his *objective* essence; since it is not *real man,* and therefore not *nature,* for man is *human nature,* who becomes as such the subject, but only the abstraction of man, self-consciousness, thingness can only be alienated self-consciousness) is the equivalent of *alienated self-consciousness,* and *thingness* is established by this alienation. It is entirely to be expected that a living, natural being equipped and endowed with objective, i.e. material essential powers, should have *real* natural *objects* for the objects of its being, and that its self-alienation should take the form of the establishment of a *real,* objective world, but as something *external* to it, a world which does not belong to its being and which overpowers it. There is nothing incomprehensible or mysterious about that. It would only be mysterious if the contrary were true. But it is equally clear that a *self-consciousness,* through its alienation, can only establish *thingness,* i.e. an abstract thing, a thing of abstraction and not a *real* thing. It is also clear that thingness is therefore in no way something *independent* or *substantial vis-à-vis* self-consciousness; it is a mere creature, a *postulate* of self-consciousness. And what is postulated, instead of confirming itself, is only a confirmation of the act of postulating; an act which, for a single moment, concentrates its energy as product and *apparently* confers upon that product—but only for a moment—the role of an independent, real being.

When real, corporeal *man,* his feet firmly planted on the solid earth and breathing all the powers of nature, establishes his real, objective *essential powers* as alien objects by externalization [*Entäusserung*]. It is not the *establishing* [*Setzen*] which is subject; it is the subjectivity of *objective* essential powers whose action must therefore be an *objective* one. An objective being acts objectively, and it would not act objectively if objectivity were not an inherent part of its essential nature. It creates and establishes only objects because it is established by objects, because it is fundamentally *nature.* In the act of establishing it therefore does not descend from its "pure activity" to the *creation of objects*; on the contrary, its *objective* product simply confirms its *objective* activity, its activity as the activity of an objective, natural being.

Here we see how consistent naturalism or humanism differs both from idealism and materialism and is at the same time their unifying truth. We also see that only naturalism is capable of comprehending the process of world history.

Man is directly a *natural being.* As a natural being and as a living natural being he is on the one hand equipped with *natural powers,* with *vital powers,* he is an *active* natural being; these powers exist in him as dispositions and capacities, as *drives.* On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, objective being he is a *suffering,* conditioned, and limited being, like animals and plants. That is to say, the *objects* of his drives exist outside him as *objects* independent of him; but these objects are objects of his *need,* essential objects,

indispensable to the exercise and confirmation of his essential powers. To say that man is a *corporeal,* living, real, sensuous, objective being with natural powers means that he has *real, sensuous objects* as the object of his being and of his vital expression, or that he can only *express* his life in real, sensuous objects. To *be* objective, natural, and sensuous and to have object, nature, and sense outside oneself, or to be oneself object, nature, and sense for a third person is one and the same thing. *Hunger* is a natural *need;* it therefore requires a *nature* and an *object* outside itself in order to satisfy and still itself. Hunger is the acknowledged need of my body for an *object* which exists outside itself and which is indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential nature. The sun is an *object* for the plant, an indispensable object which confirms its life, just as the plant is an object for the sun, an *expression* of its life-awakening power and its *objective* essential power.

A being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a natural being and plays no part in the system of nature. A being which has no object outside itself is not an objective being. A being which is not itself an object for a third being has no being for its *object,* i.e. it has no objective relationships and its existence is not objective.

A non-objective being is a *non-being.*

Imagine a being which is neither an object itself nor has an object. In the first place, such a being would be the *only* being; no other being would exist outside it, it would exist in a condition of solitude. For as soon as there are objects outside me, as soon as I am not *alone,* I am *another,* a reality *other* than the object outside me. For this third object I am therefore a *reality* other than it, i.e. *its* object. A being which is not the object of another being therefore presupposes that *no* objective being exists. As soon as I have an object, this object has me for its object. But a non-objective being is an unreal, non-sensuous, merely thought, i.e. merely conceived being, a being of abstraction. To be *sensuous,* i.e. to be real, is to be an object of sense, a *sensuous* object, and thus to have sensuous objects outside oneself, objects of one's sense perception. To be sensuous is to *suffer* (to be subjected to the actions of another).

Man as an objective sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being, and because he feels his suffering [*Leiden*], he is a *passionate* [*leidenschaftliches*] being. Passion is man's essential power vigorously striving to attain its object.

But man is not only a natural being; he is a *human* natural being; i.e. he is a being for himself and hence a *species-being,* as which he must confirm and realize himself both in his being and in his knowing. Consequently, *human* objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, nor is *human sense,* in its immediate and objective existence, *human* sensibility and human objectivity. Neither objective nor subjective nature is immediately pres-

ent in a form adequate to the *human* being. And as everything natural must *come into being*, so man also has his process of origin in *history*. But for him history is a conscious process, and hence one which consciously supersedes itself. History is the true natural history of man. (We shall return to this later.)

Thirdly, since this establishing of thingness is itself only an appearance, an act which contradicts the nature of pure activity, it must be superseded once again and thingness must be denied.

ad 3, 4, 5, 6.

(3) This alienation of consciousness has not only a *negative* but also a *positive* significance, and (4) it has this positive significance not only *for us* or in itself, but for consciousness itself.

(5) *For self-consciousness* the negative of the object or its own supersession of itself has a *positive* significance—or self-consciousness *knows* the nullity of the object—in that self-consciousness alienates *itself*, for in this alienation it *knows* itself as object or, for the sake of the indivisible unity of *being-for-itself*, the object as itself. (6) On the other hand the other moment is also present in the process, namely, that self-consciousness has superseded and taken back into itself this alienation and objectivity, and is therefore *at home* in its *other-being as such*.

To recapitulate. The appropriation of estranged objective being or the supersession of objectivity in the form of *estrangement*—which must proceed from indifferent otherness to real, hostile estrangement—principally means for Hegel the supersession of *objectivity*, since it is not the *particular* character of the object but its *objective* character which constitutes the offence and the estrangement as far as self-consciousness is concerned. The object is therefore negative, self-superseding, a *nullity*. This nullity of the object has not only a negative but also a *positive* significance for consciousness, for it is precisely the *self-confirmation* of its non-objectivity and *abstraction*. For *consciousness itself* the nullity of the object therefore has a positive significance because it *knows* this nullity, the objective being, as its *self-alienation*; because it knows that this nullity exists only as a result of its own self-alienation . . .

The way in which consciousness is, and in which something is for it, is *knowing*. Knowing is its only act. Hence something comes to exist for consciousness in so far as it *knows* that *something*. Knowing is its only objective relationship. It knows the nullity of the object, i.e. that the object is not distinct from it, the non-existence of the object for it, in that it knows the object as its own *self-alienation*; that is, it knows itself—i.e. it knows knowing, considered as an object—in that the object is only the *appearance* of an object, an illusion, which in essence is nothing more than knowing itself which has confronted itself with itself and hence with a *nullity*, a something which has *no* objectivity

outside knowing. Knowing knows that when it relates itself to an object it is only *outside* itself, alienates itself; that it only *appears* to itself as an object, or rather, that what appears to it as an object is only itself.

On the other hand, says Hegel, this other moment is also present in the process, namely, that self-consciousness has superseded and taken back into itself this alienation and objectivity, and is therefore *at home* in its *other-being as such.*

This discussion is a compendium of all the illusions of speculation.

Firstly, consciousness—self-consciousness—is *at home* in its *other-being as such.* It is therefore, if we here abstract from Hegel's abstraction and talk instead of self-consciousness, of the self-consciousness of man, *at home in its other-being as such.* This implies, for one thing, that consciousness—knowing as knowing, thinking as thinking—claims to be the direct *opposite* of itself, claims to be the sensuous world, reality, life—thought overreaching itself in thought (Feuerbach). This aspect is present in so far as consciousness as mere consciousness is offended not by estranged objectivity but by *objectivity as such.*

Secondly it implies that self-conscious man, in so far as he has acknowledged and superseded the spiritual world, or the general spiritual existence of his world, as self-alienation, goes on to reaffirm it in this alienated form and presents it as his true existence, restores it and claims to be *at home in his other-being as such.* Thus, for example, having superseded religion and recognized it as a product of self-alienation, he still finds himself confirmed in *religion* as *religion.* Here *is* the root of Hegel's *false* positivism or of his merely *apparent* criticism: it is what Feuerbach calls the positing, negating, and re-establishing of religion or theology, but it needs to be conceived in a more general way. So reason is at home in unreason as unreason. Man, who has realized that in law, politics, etc., he leads an alienated life, leads his true human life in this alienated life as such. Self-affirmation, self-confirmation in *contradiction* with itself and with the knowledge and the nature of the object is therefore true *knowledge* and true *life.*

Therefore there can no longer be any question about a compromise on Hegel's part with religion, the state, etc., since this untruth is the untruth of his principle.

If I *know* religion as *alienated* human self-consciousness, then what I know in it as religion is not my self-consciousness but my alienated self-consciousness confirmed in it. Thus I know that the self-consciousness which belongs to the essence of my own self is confirmed not in *religion* but in the *destruction* and *supersession* of religion.

In Hegel, therefore, the negation of the negation is not the confirmation of true being through the negation of apparent being. It is the confirmation of

apparent being or self-estranged being in its negation, or the negation of this apparent being as an objective being residing outside man and independent of him and its transformation into the subject.

The act of superseding therefore plays a special role in which negation and preservation (affirmation) are brought together.

Thus, for example, in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right, private right* superseded equals *morality,* morality superseded equals *family,* family superseded equals *civil society,* civil society superseded equals *state* and state superseded equals *world history.* In *reality* private right, morality, family, civil society, state, etc., continue to exist, but have become *moments* and modes of human existence which are meaningless in isolation but which mutually dissolve and engender one another. They are *moments of movement.*

In their real existence this character of *mobility* is hidden. It first appears, is first revealed, in thought and in philosophy. Hence my true religious existence is my existence in the *philosophy of religion,* my true political existence is my existence in the *philosophy of right,* my true natural existence is my existence in the *philosophy of nature,* my true artistic existence is my existence in the *philosophy of art* and my true *human* existence is my *existence in philosophy.* Similarly, the true existence of religion, state, nature, and art is the *philosophy* of religion, nature, the state, and art. But if the philosophy of religion, etc., is for me the true existence of religion, then I am truly religious only as a *philosopher of religion,* and I therefore deny *real* religiosity and the really *religious* man. But at the same time I *confirm* them, partly in my own existence or in the alien existence which I oppose to them—for this *is* merely their *philosophical* expression—and partly in their particular and original form, for I regard them as merely *apparent* other-being, as allegories, forms of their own true existence concealed under sensuous mantles, i.e. forms of my *philosophical* existence.

Similarly, *quality* superseded equals *quantity,* quantity superseded equals *measure,* measure superseded equals *essence,* essence superseded equals *appearance,* appearance superseded equals *reality,* reality superseded equals the *concept,* the concept superseded equals *objectivity,* objectivity superseded equals the *absolute idea,* the absolute idea superseded equals *nature,* nature superseded equals *subjective* spirit, subjective spirit superseded equals *ethical* objective spirit, ethical spirit superseded equals *art,* art superseded equals *religion,* religion superseded equals *absolute knowledge.*

On the one hand this act of superseding is the act of superseding an entity of thought; thus, private property as *thought* is superseded in the *thought* of morality. And because thought imagines itself to be the direct opposite of itself, i.e. *sensuous reality,* and therefore regards its own activity as *sensuous, real* activity, this supersession in thought, which leaves its object in existence in

reality, thinks it has actually overcome it. On the other hand, since the object has now become a moment of thought for the thought which is doing the superseding, it is regarded in its real existence as a confirmation of thought, of self-consciousness, of abstraction.

From one aspect the existence which Hegel *supersedes* in philosophy is therefore not *real* religion, state, nature, but religion already in the form of an object of knowledge, i.e. *dogmatics*; hence also *jurisprudence, political science* and *natural science*. From this aspect he therefore stands in opposition both to the *actual* being and to the immediate non-philosophical *science* or non-philosophical *concepts* of this being. He therefore contradicts their current conceptions.

From the other aspect the man who is religious, etc., can find his final confirmation in Hegel.

We should now examine the *positive* moments of the Hegelian dialectic, within the determining limits of estrangement.

(a) *The act of superseding* as an objective movement which *re-absorbs* alienation into itself. This is the insight, expressed within estrangement, into the *appropriation* of objective being through the supersession of its alienation; it is the estranged insight into the *real objectification* of man, into the real appropriation of his objective being through the destruction of the *estranged* character of the objective world, through the supersession of its estranged mode of existence, just as atheism as the supersession of God is the emergence of theoretical humanism, and communism as the supersession of private property the vindication of real human life as man's property, the emergence of practical humanism. Atheism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of religion; communism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of private property. Only when we have superseded this mediation—which is, however, a necessary precondition—will *positive* humanism, positively originating in itself, come into being.

But atheism and communism are no flight, no abstraction, no loss of the objective world created by man or of his essential powers projected into objectivity, no impoverished regression to unnatural, primitive simplicity. They are rather the first real emergence, the realization become real for man, of his essence as something real.

Therefore, in grasping the *positive* significance of the negation which has reference to itself, even if once again in estranged form, Hegel grasps man's self-estrangement, alienation of being, loss of objectivity, and loss of reality as self-discovery, expression of being, objectification, and realization. In short, he sees labor—within abstraction—as man's *act of self-creation* and man's relation to himself as an alien being and the manifestation of himself as an alien being as the emergence of *species-consciousness* and *species-life*.

(b) But in Hegel, apart from or rather as a consequence of the inversion we have already described, this act appears, firstly, to be *merely formal* because it is abstract and because human nature itself is seen only as *abstract thinking being*, as self-consciousness.

And secondly, because the conception is *formal* and *abstract*, the supersession of alienation becomes a confirmation of alienation. In other words, Hegel sees this movement of *self-creation* and *self-objectification* in the form of *self-alienation* and *self-estrangement* as the *absolute* and hence the final *expression of human life* which has itself as its aim, is at rest in itself, and has attained its own essential nature.

This movement in its abstract form as dialectic is therefore regarded as *truly human life*. And since it is still an abstraction, an estrangement of human life, it is regarded as a *divine process*, but as the divine process of man. It is man's abstract, pure, absolute being (as distinct from himself), which itself passes through this process.

Thirdly, this process must have a bearer, a subject; but the subject comes into being only as the result; this result, the subject knowing itself as absolute self-consciousness, is therefore *God, absolute spirit, the self-knowing and self-manifesting idea*. Real man and real nature become mere predicates, symbols of this hidden, unreal man and this unreal nature. Subject and predicate therefore stand in a relation of absolute inversion to one another; a *mystical subject–object* or *subjectivity encroaching upon the object*, the *absolute subject* as a *process*, as a *subject* which *alienates* itself and returns to itself from alienation, while at the same time reabsorbing this alienation, and the subject as this process; pure, *ceaseless* revolving within itself.

First, the formal and abstract conception of man's act of self-creation or self-objectification.

Because Hegel equates man with self-consciousness, the estranged object, the estranged essential reality of man is nothing but consciousness, nothing but the thought of estrangement, its *abstract* and hence hollow and unreal expression, *negation*. The supersession of alienation is therefore likewise nothing but an abstract, hollow supersession of that hollow abstraction, the *negation of the negation*. The inexhaustible, vital, sensuous, concrete activity of self-objectification is therefore reduced to its mere abstraction, *absolute negativity*, an abstraction which is then given permanent form as such and conceived as independent activity, as activity itself. Since this so-called negativity is nothing more than the *abstract, empty* form of that real living act, its content can only be a *formal* content, created by abstraction from all content. Consequently there are general, abstract *forms of abstraction* which fit every content and are therefore indifferent to all content; forms of thought and logical categories torn

away from *real* mind and *real* nature. (We shall expound the *logical* content of absolute negativity later.)

Hegel's positive achievement in his speculative logic is to present *determinate concepts*, the universal *fixed thought-forms* in their independence of nature and mind, as a necessary result of the universal estrangement of human existence, and thus also of human thought, and to comprehend them as moments in the process of abstraction. For example, *being* superseded is essence, essence superseded is the concept, the concept superseded is . . . the absolute idea. But what is the absolute idea? It is compelled to supersede its own self again, if it does not wish to go through the whole act of abstraction once more from the beginning and to reconcile itself to being a totality of abstractions or a self-comprehending abstraction. But the abstraction which comprehends itself as abstraction knows itself to be nothing; it must relinquish itself, the abstraction, and so arrives at something which is its exact opposite, *nature*. Hence the whole of the *Logic* is proof of the fact that abstract thought is nothing for itself, that the absolute idea is nothing for itself, and that only *nature* is something.

The absolute idea, the abstract idea which "*considered* from the aspect of its unity with itself is *intuition* [*Anschauen*]," and which "in its own absolute truth *resolves* to let the moment of its particularity or of initial determination and other-being, the *immediate idea*, as its reflection, *issue freely from itself as nature*," this whole idea, which conducts itself in such a strange and baroque fashion, and which has caused the Hegelians such terrible headaches, is purely and simply *abstraction*, i.e. the abstract thinker; abstraction which, taught by experience and enlightened as to its own truth, resolves under various conditions—themselves false and still abstract—to *relinquish itself* and to establish its other-being, the particular, the determinate, in place of its self-pervasion [*Beisichsein*], non-being, universality and indeterminateness; to let *nature*, which it concealed within itself as a mere abstraction, as a thing of thought, *issue freely from itself*, i.e. to abandon abstraction and to take a look at nature, which exists *free* from abstraction. The abstract idea, which directly becomes *intuition*, is quite simply nothing more than abstract thought which relinquishes itself and decides to engage in *intuiting*. This entire transition from logic to philosophy of nature is nothing more than the transition—so difficult for the abstract thinker to effect, and hence described by him in such a bizarre manner—from *abstracting* to *intuiting*. The *mystical* feeling which drives the philosopher from abstract thinking to intuition is *boredom*, the longing for a content.

The man estranged from himself is also the thinker estranged from his *essence*, i.e. from his natural and human essence. His thoughts are therefore fixed phantoms existing outside nature and man. In his *Logic* Hegel has locked

up all these phantoms, conceiving each of them firstly as negation, i.e. as *alienation* of *human* thought, and secondly as negation of the negation, i.e. as supersession of this alienation, as a *real* expression of human thought. But since this negation of the negation is itself still trapped in estrangement, what this amounts to is in part the restoration of these fixed phantoms in their estrangement and in part a failure to move beyond the final stage, the stage of self-reference in alienation, which is the true existence of these phantoms.[1] In so far as this abstraction apprehends itself and experiences an infinite boredom with itself, we find in Hegel an abandonment of abstract thought which moves solely within thought, which has no eyes, teeth, ears, anything, and a resolve to recognize *nature* as being and to go over to intuition.

But *nature* too, taken abstractly, for itself, and fixed in its separation from man, is *nothing* for man. It goes without saying that the abstract thinker who decides on intuition, intuits nature abstractly. Just as nature lay enclosed in the thinker in a shape which even to him was shrouded and mysterious, as an absolute idea, a thing of thought, so what he allowed to come forth from himself was simply this *abstract nature,* nature as a thing of thought—but with the significance now of being the other-being of thought, real, intuited nature as distinct from abstract thought. Or, to put it in human terms, the abstract thinker discovers from intuiting nature that the entities which he imagined he was creating out of nothing, out of pure abstraction, in a divine dialectic, as the pure products of the labor of thought living and moving within itself and never looking out into reality, are nothing more than *abstractions* from *natural forms.* The whole of nature only repeats to him in a sensuous, external form the abstractions of logic. He *analyses* nature and these abstractions again. His intuiting of nature is therefore only the act of confirmation of his abstraction from the intuition of nature, a conscious re-enactment of the process by which he produced his abstraction. Thus, for example, Time is equated with Negativity referred to itself. In the natural form, superseded Movement as Matter corresponds to superseded Becoming as Being. Light is the *natural* form of *Reflection-in-itself.* Body as *Moon* and *Comet* is the *natural* form of the *antithesis* which, according to the *Logic,* is the *positive grounded upon itself* and the *negative* grounded upon itself. The Earth is the *natural* form of the logical *ground,* as the negative unity of the antithesis, etc.

Nature as nature, i.e. in so far as it is sensuously distinct from the secret sense hidden within it, nature separated and distinct from these abstractions is *nothing,* a *nothing proving itself to be nothing,* it is *devoid of sense,* or only has the sense of an externality to be superseded.

"In the finite-*teleological* view is to be found the correct premise that nature does not contain the absolute end within itself."

Its end is the confirmation of abstraction.

"Nature has revealed itself as the idea in the *form* of *other-being*. Since the *idea* in this form is the negative of itself or *external to itself*, nature is not only external relative to this idea, but *externality* constitutes the form in which it exists as nature."

Externality here should not be understood as *self-externalizing sensuousness* accessible to light and to sensuous man. It is to be taken in the sense of alienation, a flaw, a weakness, something which ought not to be. For that which is true is still the idea. Nature is only the *form* of its *other-being*. And since abstract thought is the *essence*, that which is external to it is in essence something merely *external*. The abstract thinker recognizes at the same time that *sensuousness*, *externality* in contrast to thought which moves and lives *within itself*, is the essence of nature. But at the same time he expresses this antithesis in such a way that this *externality of nature*, its *antithesis* to thought, is its *defect* and that in so far as it is distinct from abstraction it is a defective being. A being which is defective not only for me, not only in my eyes, but in itself, has something outside itself which it lacks. That is to say, its essence is something other than itself. For the abstract thinker nature must therefore supersede itself, since it is already posited by him as a potentially *superseded* being.

"*For us*, mind has *nature* as its *premise*, since it is nature's *truth* and therefore its *absolute primus*. In this truth nature has *disappeared*, and mind has yielded as the idea which has attained being-for-itself, whose *object* as well as *subject* is *the concept*. This identity is *absolute negativity*, for whereas in nature the concept has its perfect external objectivity, in this its alienation has been superseded and the concept has become identical with itself. It is this identity only in that it is a return from nature."

"*Revelation*, as the *abstract idea*, is unmediated transition to, the *coming-to-be* of, nature; as the revelation of the mind which is free it is the *establishing* of nature as *its own* world; an establishing which, as reflection, is at the same time a *presupposing* of the world as independently existing nature. Revelation in its concept is the creation of nature as the mind's being, in which it procures the affirmation and truth of its freedom." "The *absolute is mind*: this is the highest definition of the absolute."

Note

1. *K. M.*: That is, Hegel substitutes the act of abstraction revolving within itself for these fixed abstractions; in so doing he has the merit, first of all, of having revealed the source of all these inappropriate concepts which originally belonged to separate philosophers, of

having combined them and of having created as the object of criticism the exhaustive range of abstraction rather than one particular abstraction. We shall later see why Hegel separates thought from the *subject*; but it is already clear that if man is not human, then the expression of his essential nature cannot be human, and therefore that thought itself could not be conceived as an expression of man's being, of man as a human and natural subject, with eyes, ears, etc., living in society, in the world and in nature.

"THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY—IDEOLOGY IN GENERAL" (1844–46)

Marx continues to distinguish his own position from Hegel and Feuerbach. He develops a major category of his mature reflection, the idea of production*—that humans produce our means of subsistence (i.e., use tools to transform the material environment from which we derive our life). As we transform these means of production we transform the social relations established by that production and thus transform our consciousness, our reflexive self-awareness. We find here his famous phrase "consciousness does not determine life, but life determines consciousness."*

Right up to its most recent efforts, German criticism never left the realm of philosophy. Far from examining its general philosophic premises, all of its inquiries were based on one philosophical system, that of Hegel. There was mystification not only in the answers but also even in the questions themselves. This dependence on Hegel is the reason why none of these modern critics even attempted a comprehensive criticism of the Hegelian system, though each of them claimed to have gone beyond Hegel. Their polemics against Hegel and against one another are rather limited. Each critic picks one aspect of the Hegelian system and applies it to the entire system as well as to the aspects chosen by other critics. In the beginning they took up pure and unfalsified Hegelian categories such as "Substance" or "Self-consciousness." Later they desecrated such categories by giving them more mundane names such as "Species," "the Unique," "Man," etc.

All German philosophical criticism from Strauss to Stirner is confined to criticism of *religious* conceptions. The critics proceeded from real religion and actual theology. As they went on, they determined in various ways what constitutes religious consciousness and religious conceptions. Their progress consisted of their subsuming the allegedly dominant metaphysical, political, juridical, moral, and other concepts under the class of religious or theological concepts. Similarly, they declared political, juridical, and moral consciousness

to be religious or theological consciousness, and the political, juridical, and moral man, "*Man*" in the last resort, to be religious. They presupposed the governance of religion. Gradually every dominant relationship was held to be religious and made into a cult, such as the cult of law, the cult of state, etc. Eventually there was nothing but dogmas and belief in dogmas. The world was more and more sanctified until our honorable Saint Max [Stirner] was able to sanctify it en bloc and dismiss it once for all.

The Old Hegelians had *comprehended* everything once they reduced it to a Hegelian logical category. The Young Hegelians *criticized* everything by imputing religious conceptions to it or declaring everything to be theological. The Young Hegelians are in agreement with the Old Hegelians in believing in the governance of religion, concepts, a universal principle in the existing world. But one party attacks this governance as usurpation while the other party praises it as legitimate.

Since the Young Hegelians regard concepts, thoughts, ideas, and all products of consciousness, to which they give independent existence, as the real fetters of man—while the Old Hegelians pronounced them the true bonds of human society—it is obvious that the Young Hegelians have to fight only against the illusions of consciousness. In the Young Hegelians' fantasies the relationships of men, all their actions, their chains, and their limitations are products of their consciousness. Consequently they give men the moral postulate of exchanging their present consciousness for human, critical, or egoistic consciousness to remove their limitations. This amounts to a demand to interpret what exists in a different way, that is, to recognize it by means of a different interpretation. The Young-Hegelian ideologists are the staunchest conservatives, despite their allegedly "world-shaking" statements. The most recent among them have found the correct expression for their doings in saying they are fighting only against "*phrases.*" They forget, however, that they fight them only with phrases of their own. In no way are they attacking the actual existing world; they merely attack the phrases of this world. The only results this philosophic criticism could achieve were some elucidations on Christianity, one-sided as they are, from the point of view of religious history. All their other assertions are only further embellishments of their basic claim that these unimportant elucidations are discoveries of world-historical significance.

Not one of these philosophers ever thought to look into the connection between German philosophy and German reality, between their criticism and their own material environment.

1. Ideology in General, Especially German Philosophy*

((We know only one science, the science of history. History can be viewed from two sides: it can be divided into the history of nature and that of man. The two sides, however, are not to be seen as independent entities. As long as man has existed, nature and man have affected each other. The history of nature, so-called natural history, does not concern us here at all. But we will have to discuss the history of man, since almost all ideology amounts to either a distorted interpretation of this history or a complete abstraction from it. Ideology itself is only one of the sides of this history.))

The premises from which we start are not arbitrary; they are not dogmas but rather actual premises from which abstraction can be made only in imagination. They are the real individuals, their actions, and their material conditions of life, those which they find existing as well as those which they produce through their actions. These premises can be substantiated in a purely empirical way.

The first premise of all human history, of course, is the existence of living human individuals. ((The first *historical* act of these individuals, the act by which they distinguish themselves from animals is not the fact that they think but the fact that they begin to *produce their means of subsistence.*)) The first fact to be established, then, is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relationship to the rest of nature. Of course, we cannot discuss here the physical nature of man or the natural conditions in which man finds himself—geological, oro-hydrographical, climatic, and others. ((These relationships affect not only the original and natural organization of men, especially as to race, but also his entire further development or non-development up to the present.)) All historiography must proceed from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the actions of men.

Man can be distinguished from the animal by consciousness, religion, or anything else you please. He begins to distinguish himself from the animal the moment he begins to *produce* his means of subsistence, a step required by his physical organization. By producing food, man indirectly produces his material life itself.

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*This heading and subsequent material within double parentheses crossed out in the manuscript.

The way in which man produces his food depends first of all on the nature of the means of subsistence that he finds and has to reproduce. This mode of production must not be viewed simply as reproduction of the physical existence of individuals. Rather it is a definite form of their activity, a definite way of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life.* As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with what they produce, with *what* they produce and *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions which determine their production.

This production begins with *population growth* which in turn presupposes *interaction* [*Verkehr*] among individuals. The form of such interaction is again determined by production.

The relations of various nations with one another depend upon the extent to which each of them has developed its productive forces, the division of labor, and domestic commerce. This proposition is generally accepted. But not only the relation of one nation to others, but also the entire internal structure of the nation itself depends on the stage of development achieved by its production and its domestic and international commerce. How far the productive forces of a nation are developed is shown most evidently by the degree to which the division of labor has been developed. Each new productive force, insofar as it is not only a quantitative extension of productive forces already known (e.g. cultivation of land) will bring about a further development of the division of labor.

The division of labor in a nation leads first of all to the separation of industrial-commercial labor from agricultural labor and consequently to the separation of *town* and *country* and to a clash of their interests. Its further development leads to the separation of commercial from industrial labor. At the same time, within these various branches, there develop through the division of labor further various divisions among the individuals co-operating in specific kinds of labor. The relative position of these individual groups is determined by the methods employed in agricultural, industrial, and commercial labor (patriarchalism, slavery, estates, classes). The same conditions can be observed in the relations of various nations if commerce has been further developed.

The different stages of development in the division of labor are just so many different forms of ownership; that is, the stage in the division of labor also determines the relations of individuals to one another so far as the material, instrument, and product of labor are concerned.

The first form of ownership is tribal ownership. It corresponds to the undeveloped stage of production where people live by hunting and fishing,

by breeding animals or, in the highest stage, by agriculture. Great areas of uncultivated land are required in the latter case. The division of labor at this stage is still very undeveloped and confined to extending the natural division of labor in the family. The social structure thus is limited to an extension of the family: patriarchal family chieftains, below them the members of the tribe, finally the slaves. The slavery latent in the family develops only gradually with the increase in population, the increase of wants, and the extension of external relations in war as well as in barter.

The second form is the ancient communal and state ownership which proceeds especially from the union of several tribes into a *city* by agreement or by conquest; this form is still accompanied by slavery. Alongside communal ownership there already develops movable, and later even immovable, private property, but as an abnormal form subordinate to communal ownership. The citizens hold power over their laboring slaves only in community and are therefore bound to the form of communal ownership. The communal private property of the active citizens compels them to remain in this natural form of association over against their slaves. Hence the whole social structure based on communal ownership and with it the power of the people decline as immovable private property develops. The division of labor is developed to a larger extent. We already find antagonism between town and country and later antagonism between states representing urban interests and those representing rural interests. Within the cities themselves we find the antagonism between industry and maritime commerce. The class relation between citizens and slaves is then fully developed.

With the development of private property we encounter for the first time those conditions which we shall find again with modern private property, only on a larger scale. On the one hand, there is the concentration of private property which began very early in Rome (as proved by the Licinian agrarian law) and proceeded very rapidly from the time of the civil wars and particularly under the emperors. On the other hand, there is linked to this the transformation of the plebeian small peasantry into a proletariat that never achieved an independent development because of its intermediate position between propertied citizens and slaves.

The third form is feudal or estate ownership. Antiquity started out from the *town* and the small territory around it; the Middle Ages started out from the *country*. This different starting-point was caused by the sparse population at that time, scattered over a large area and receiving no large population increase from the conquerors. In contrast to Greece and Rome, the feudal development began in a much larger area, prepared by the Roman conquests

and the spreading of agriculture initially connected with these conquests. The last centuries of the declining Roman Empire and its conquest by the barbarians destroyed many productive forces. Agriculture had declined, trade had come to a standstill or had been interrupted by force, and the rural and urban population had decreased. These conditions and the mode of organization of the conquest determined by them developed feudal property under the influence of the Germanic military constitution. Like tribal and communal ownership, it is based again on a community. While the slaves stood in opposition to the ancient community, here the serfs as the direct producing class stand in opposition. As soon as feudalism is fully developed, there also emerges antagonism to the towns. The hierarchical system of land ownership and the armed bodies of retainers gave the nobility power over the serfs. Like the ancient communal ownership this feudal organization was an association directed against a subjected producing class. But the form of association and the relation to the direct producers were different because of the different conditions of production.

This feudal organization of land ownership had its counterpart in the *towns* in the form of corporate property, the feudal organization of the trades. Property consisted mainly in the labor of each individual. The necessity for association against the organized robber nobility, the need for communal markets in an age when the industrialist was at the same time a merchant, the growing competition of escaped serfs pouring into the rising cities, and the feudal structure of the whole country gave rise to *guilds*. The gradually accumulated capital of individual craftsmen and their stable number in comparison to the growing population produced the relationship of journeyman and apprentice. In the towns, this led to a hierarchy similar to that in the country.

The main form of property during the feudal times consisted, on the one hand, of landed property with serf labor and, on the other hand, individual labor with small capital controlling the labor of journeymen. The organization of both was determined by the limited conditions of production: small-scale, primitive cultivation of land and industry based on crafts. There was little division of labor when feudalism was at its peak. Every district carried in itself the antagonism of town and country. Though division into estates was strongly marked, there was no division of importance apart from the differentiation of princes, nobility, clergy, and peasants in the country, and masters, journeymen, apprentices, and soon the mob of day laborers in the cities. The strip-system hindered such a division in agriculture; cottage industry of the peasants themselves emerged; and in industry there was no division of labor at all within particular trades, and very little among them. The separation of

industry and commerce occurred in older towns, and in newer towns it developed later when they entered into mutual relations.

The merger of larger territories into feudal kingdoms was a necessity for the landed nobility as well as for the cities. The organization of the ruling class, the nobility, had a monarch at its head in all instances.

The fact is, then, that definite individuals who are productively active in a specific way enter into these definite social and political relations. In each particular instance, empirical observation must show empirically, without any mystification or speculation, the connection of the social and political structure with production. The social structure and the state continually evolve out of the life-process of definite individuals, but individuals not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination but rather as they *really* are, that is, as they work, produce materially, and act under definite material limitations, presuppositions, and conditions independent of their will.

((The ideas which these individuals form are ideas either about their relation to nature, their mutual relations, or their own nature. It is evident that in all these cases these ideas are the conscious expression—real or illusory—of their actual relationships and activities, of their production and commerce, and of their social and political behavior. The opposite assumption is possible only if, in addition to the spirit of the actual and materially evolved individuals, a separate spirit is presupposed. If the conscious expression of the actual relations of these individuals is illusory, if in their imagination they turn reality upside down, this in turn is a result of their limited mode of activity and their limited social relations arising from it.))

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness is directly interwoven with the material activity and the material relationships of men; it is the language of actual life. Conceiving, thinking, and the intellectual relationships of men appear here as the direct result of their material behavior. The same applies to intellectual production as manifested in a people's language of politics, law, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., but these are real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the relationships corresponding to these up to their highest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else except conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If men and their circumstances appear upside down in all ideology as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon is caused by their historical life-process, just as the inversion of objects on the retina is caused by their immediate physical life.

In direct contrast to German philosophy, which descends from heaven to earth, here one ascends from earth to heaven. In other words, to arrive at man in the flesh, one does not set out from what men say, imagine, or conceive, nor from man as he is described, thought about, imagined, or conceived. Rather one sets out from real, active men and their actual life-process and demonstrates the development of ideological reflexes and echoes of that process. The phantoms formed in the human brain, too, are necessary sublimations of man's material life-process which is empirically verifiable and connected with material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, and all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness no longer seem to be independent. They have no history or development. Rather, men who develop their material production and their material relationships alter their thinking and the products of their thinking along with their real existence. Consciousness does not determine life, but life determines consciousness. In the first view the starting point is consciousness taken as a living individual; in the second it is the real living individuals themselves as they exist in real life, and consciousness is considered only as *their* consciousness.

This view is not devoid of premises. It proceeds from real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. These premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and fixation, but in their real, empirically perceptible process of development under certain conditions. When this active life-process is presented, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists who are themselves still abstract, or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists.

Where speculation ends, namely in actual life, there real, positive science begins as the representation of the practical activity and practical process of the development of men. Phrases about consciousness cease and real knowledge takes their place. With the description of reality, independent philosophy loses its medium of existence. At best, a summary of the most general results, abstractions derived from observation of the historical development of men, can take its place. Apart from actual history, these abstractions have in themselves no value whatsoever. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material and to indicate the sequence of its particular strata. By no means do they give us a recipe or schema, as philosophy does, for trimming the epochs of history. On the contrary, the difficulties begin only when we start the observation and arrangement of the material, the real description, whether of a past epoch or of the present.

"THE HOLY FAMILY, OR CRITIQUE OF CRITICAL CRITICISM" (1844)

AGAINST BRUNO BAUER AND CO. *(EXTRACT FROM CHAPTER VI)*

Exiled to Paris in 1843, Marx met Engels and discovered both shared a common passion for Feuerbach, but it was a passion that would dwindle as politics for both men became the true arena of emancipatory effort. This marks the beginning of Marx's loss of interest in speculative philosophy and theology (as in Bruno Bauer), and the turn of his critical attention to the British political economists (those practical philosophers of wealth). The idea of class and of class struggle is taking shape—not consciousness conscious of itself (Hegel) but working class consciousness *engaged in political struggle.*

Critical Battle against French Materialism

"*Spinozism* dominated the eighteenth century in its later French variety which made matter into substance, as well as in deism, which conferred on matter a more spiritual name. . . . *Spinoza's French school* and the supporters of deism were but two sects disputing over the true meaning of *his system*. . . . The simple fate of this Enlightenment was its sinking into *romanticism* after being obliged to surrender to the reaction which began after the French movement."

That is what *Criticism* says.

To the critical history of French materialism we shall oppose a brief outline of its profane, voluminous history. We shall admit with due respect the abyss between history as it really happened and history as it happened according to the decree of "*Absolute Criticism,*" the creator equally of the old and of the new. And finally, obeying the prescriptions of *Criticism,* we shall make the "Why?", "Whence?" and "Whither?" of Critical history the "objects of a severing study."

"Speaking *exactly* and in the *prosaic* sense," the French Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, in particular *French materialism,* was not only a struggle against the existing political institutions and the existing religion and theology; it was just as much an *open* struggle against *metaphysics* of the *seventeenth century,* and against all metaphysics, in particular that of *Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza and Leibniz. Philosophy* was opposed to *metaphysics* as *Feuerbach,* in his first decisive attack on *Hegel,* opposed *sober philosophy* to

drunken speculation. Seventeenth-century *metaphysics,* beaten off the field by the French Enlightenment, to be precise, by *French materialism* of the eighteenth century, was given a *victorious and solid restoration* in *German philosophy,* particularly, in *speculative German philosophy* of the nineteenth century. After *Hegel* linked it in so masterly a fashion with all subsequent metaphysics and with German idealism and founded a metaphysical universal kingdom, the attack on *speculative metaphysics* and *metaphysics in general* again corresponded, as in the eighteenth century, to the attack on theology. It will be defeated forever by *materialism* which has now been perfected by the work of *speculation* itself and coincides with *humanism.* As *Feuerbach* represented *materialism* in the *theoretical* domain, French and English *socialism* and *communism* in the *practical* field represented *materialism* which *coincided* with *humanism.*

"Speaking *exactly* and in the *prosaic* sense," there are *two trends in French materialism*; one traces its origin to *Descartes,* the other to *Locke.* The latter is *mainly* a *French* development and leads direct to *socialism.* The former, *mechanical* materialism, merges with what is properly French *natural science.* The two trends cross in the course of development. We have no need here to go deep into French materialism, which comes direct from *Descartes,* any more than into the French *Newton* school or the development of French natural science in general.

We shall therefore just note the following:

Descartes in his *physics* endowed *matter* with self-creative power and conceived *mechanical* motion as the act of its life. He completely separated his *physics* from his *metaphysics. Within* his physics *matter* is the only *substance,* the only basis of being and of knowledge.

Mechanical French materialism followed *Descartes' physics* in opposition to his metaphysics. His followers were by profession *anti-metaphysicists,* i.e., *physicists.*

The school begins with the *physician Leroy,* reaches its zenith with the physician *Cabanis,* and the physician *Lamettrie* is its center. Descartes was still living when Leroy, like Lamettrie in the eighteenth century, transposed the Cartesian structure of *animals* to the human soul and affirmed that the soul is a *modus of the body* and *ideas are mechanical motions.* Leroy even thought Descartes had kept his real opinion secret. Descartes protested. At the end of the eighteenth century *Cabanis* perfected Cartesian materialism in his treatise: *Rapport du physique et du moral de l'homme.*

Cartesian materialism still exists today in France. It had great success in *mechanical natural science* which, "speaking *exactly* and in the *prosaic* sense" will be least of all reproached with *romanticism.*

Metaphysics of the seventeenth century, represented in France by *Descartes*, had *materialism* as its *antagonist* from its very birth. It personally opposed Descartes in *Gassendi*, the restorer of *Epicurean* materialism. French and English materialism was always closely related to *Democritus* and *Epicurus*. Cartesian metaphysics had another opponent in the *English* materialist *Hobbes*. Gassendi and Hobbes were victorious over their opponent long after their death when metaphysics was already officially dominant in all French schools.

Voltaire observed that the indifference of Frenchmen to the disputes between Jesuits and Jansenists in the eighteenth century was due less to philosophy than to *Law's* financial speculation. And, in fact, the downfall of seventeenth-century metaphysics can be explained by the materialistic theory of the eighteenth century only as far as that theoretical movement itself is explained by the practical nature of French life at the time. That life was turned to the immediate present, worldly enjoyment and wordly interests, the *earthly* world. Its anti-theological, anti-metaphysical, and materialistic practice demanded corresponding anti-theological, anti-metaphysical, and materialistic theories. Metaphysics had *in practice* lost all credit. Here we have only to indicate briefly the *theoretical* process.

In the seventeenth century metaphysics (cf. Descartes, Leibniz, and others) still had an element of *positive*, profane content. It made discoveries in mathematics, physics, and other exact sciences which seemed to come within its pale. This appearance was done away with as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. The positive sciences broke off from it and determined their own separate fields. The whole wealth of metaphysics was reduced to beings of thought and heavenly things, although this was the very time when real beings and earthly things began to be the center of all interest. Metaphysics had gone stale. In the very year in which Malebranche and Arnauld, the last great French metaphysicians of the seventeenth century, died, *Helvétius* and *Condillac* were born.

The man who deprived seventeenth-century metaphysics of all *credit* in the domain of *theory* was *Pierre Bayle*. His weapon was *skepticism*, which he forged out of metaphysics' own magic formulae. He at first proceeded from Cartesian metaphysics. As *Feuerbach* was driven by the fight against speculative theology to the fight against *speculative philosophy* precisely because he recognized in speculation the last prop of theology, because he had to force theology to turn back from pretended science to *coarse*, repulsive *faith*, so Bayle too was driven by religious doubt to doubt about metaphysics which was the support of that faith. He therefore critically investigated metaphysics from its very origin. He became its historian in order to write the history of its death. He mainly refuted *Spinoza* and *Leibniz*.

Pierre Bayle did not only prepare the reception of materialism and the philosophy of common sense in France by shattering metaphysics with his skepticism. He heralded *atheistic society,* which was soon to come to existence, by *proving* that a society consisting only of atheists *is possible,* that an atheist *can* be a respectable man and that it is not by atheism but by superstition and idolatry that man debases himself.

To quote the expression of a French writer, *Pierre Bayle* was "*the last metaphysician in the seventeenth-century sense of the word and the first philosopher in the sense of the eighteenth century.*"

Besides the negative refutation of seventeenth-century theology and metaphysics, a *positive, anti-metaphysical* system was required. A book was needed which would systematize and theoretically justify the practice of life of the time. *Locke*'s treatise on the origin of human reason came from across the Channel as if in answer to a call. It was welcomed enthusiastically like a long-awaited guest.

To the question: Was *Locke* perchance a follower of *Spinoza*? "Profane" history may answer:

Materialism is the native son of *Great Britain.* Even Britain's scholastic *Duns Scotus* wondered: "*Can matter think?*"

In order to bring about that miracle he had recourse to God's omnipotence, i.e., he forced *theology* itself to preach *materialism.* In addition he was a *nominalist.* Nominalism is a main component of *English* materialism and is in general the *first expression of materialism.*

The real founder of *English materialism* and all *modern experimental* science was *Bacon.* For him natural science was true science and *physics* based on perception was the most excellent part of natural science. *Anaxagoras* with his *homoeomeria* and *Democritus* with his atoms are often the authorities he refers to. According to his teaching the *senses* are infallible and are the *source* of all knowledge. Science is *experimental* and consists in applying a *rational method* to the data provided by the senses. Induction, analysis, comparison, observation, and experiment are the principal requisites of rational method. The first and most important of the inherent qualities of *matter* is *motion,* not only *mechanical* and *mathematical* movement, but still more *impulse, vital life-spirit, tension,* or, to use Jacob Böhme's expression, the *throes* [*Qual*] of matter. The primary forms of matter are the living, individualizing *forces of being* inherent in it and producing the distinctions between the species.

In *Bacon,* its first creator, materialism contained latent and still in a naive way the germs of all-round development. Matter smiled at man with poetical sensuous brightness. The aphoristic doctrine itself, on the other hand, was full of the inconsistencies of theology.

In its further development materialism became *one-sided. Hobbes* was the one who *systematized Bacon's* materialism. Sensuousness lost its bloom and became the abstract sensuousness of the *geometrician. Physical* motion was sacrificed to the *mechanical* or *mathematical, geometry* was proclaimed the principal science. Materialism became *hostile to humanity.* In order to overcome the *anti-human incorporeal* spirit in its own field, materialism itself was obliged to mortify its flesh and become an *ascetic.* It appeared as a *being of reason,* but it also developed the implacable logic of reason.

If man's senses are the source of all his knowledge, Hobbes argues, proceeding from Bacon, then conception, thought, imagination, etc., are nothing but phantoms of the material world more or less divested of its sensuous form. Science can only give a name to these phantoms. One name can be applied to several phantoms. There can even be names of names. But it would be a contradiction to say, on the one hand, that all ideas have their origin in the world of the senses and to maintain, on the other hand, that a word is more than a word, that besides the beings represented, which are always individual, there exist also general beings. An *incorporeal substance* is just as much a contradiction as an *incorporeal body. Body, being, substance* are one and the same *real* idea. One cannot separate the thought from matter *which* thinks. Matter is the subject of all changes. The word *infinite* is *meaningless* unless it means the capacity of our mind to go on adding without end. Since only what is material is perceptible, knowable, *nothing* is known of the existence of God. I am sure only of my own existence. Every human passion is a mechanical motion ending or beginning. The objects of impulses are what is called good. Man is subject to the same laws as nature; might and freedom are identical.

Hobbes systematized Bacon, but did not give a more precise proof of his basic principle that our knowledge and our ideas have their source in the world of the senses.

Locke proved the principle of Bacon and Hobbes in his essay on the origin of human reason.

Just as Hobbes did away with the *theistic* prejudices in Bacon's materialism, so Collins, Dodwall, Coward, Hartley, Priestley and others broke down the last bounds of Locke's sensualism. For materialists, at least, deism is no more than a convenient and easy way of getting rid of religion.

We have already mentioned how opportune Locke's work was for the French. Locke founded the philosophy of *bon sens,* of common sense; i.e., he said indirectly that no philosopher can be at variance with the healthy human senses and reason based on them.

Locke's *immediate* follower, *Condillac,* who also translated him into *French,* at once opposed Locke's sensualism to seventeenth-century *metaphysics.* He

proved that the French had quite rightly rejected metaphysics as the mere bungling of fancy and theological prejudice. He published a refutation of the systems of *Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz,* and *Malebranche.*

In his *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* he expounded Locke's ideas and proved that not only the soul, but the senses too, not only the art of creating ideas, but also the art of sensuous perception are matters of *experience* and *habit.* The whole development of man therefore depends on *education* and *environment.* It was only by *eclectic* philosophy that Condillac was ousted from the French schools.

The difference between *French* and *English* materialism follows from the difference between the two nations. The French imparted to English materialism wit, flesh and blood, and eloquence. They gave it the temperament and grace that it lacked. They *civilized* it.

In *Helvétius,* who also based himself on Locke, materialism became really French. Helvétius conceived it immediately in its application to social life (Helvétius, *De l'homme, de ses facultés intellectuelles et de son éducation*). Sensuous qualities and self-love, enjoyment and correctly understood personal interests are the bases of morals. The natural equality of human intelligence, the unity of progress of reason and progress of industry, the natural goodness of man and the omnipotence of education are the main points in his system.

In *Lamettrie's* works we find a combination of Descartes' system and English materialism. He makes use of Descartes' physics in detail. His "*Man Machine*" is a treatise after the model of Descartes' beast-machine. The physical part of Holbach's *Système de la nature, ou des lois du monde physique et du monde moral* is also a result of the combination of French and English materialism, while the moral part is based substantially on the moral of Helvétius. *Robinet* (*De la Nature*), the French materialist who had the most connection with metaphysics and was therefore praised by Hegel, refers explicitly to *Leibniz.*

We need not dwell on Volney, Dupuis, Diderot, and others any more than on the physiocrats, having already proved the dual origin of French materialism from Descartes' physics and English materialism and the opposition of French materialism to seventeenth-century *metaphysics* and to the metaphysics of Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche, and Leibniz. The Germans could not see this opposition before they came into the same opposition with *speculative metaphysics.*

As *Cartesian* materialism merges into *natural science proper,* the other branch of French materialism leads direct to *socialism* and *communism.*

There is no need of any great penetration to see from the teaching of materialism on the original goodness and equal intellectual endowment of men, the omnipotence of experience, habit, and education, and the influence of environ-

ment on man, the great significance of industry, the justification of enjoyment, etc., how necessarily materialism is connected with communism and socialism. If man draws all his knowledge, sensation, etc., from the world of the senses and the experience gained in it, the empirical world must be arranged so that in it man experiences and gets used to what is really human and that he becomes aware of himself as man. If correctly understood interest is the principle of all morals, man's private interest must be made to coincide with the interest of humanity. If man is unfree in the materialist sense, i.e., is free not through the negative power to avoid this or that, but through the positive power to assert his true individuality, crime must not be punished in the individual, but the anti-social source of crime must be destroyed, and each man must be given social scope for the vital manifestation of his being. If man is shaped by his surroundings, his surroundings must be made human. If man is social by nature, he will develop his true nature only in society, and the power of his nature must be measured not by the power of separate individuals but by the power of society.

This and similar propositions are to be found almost literally even in the oldest French materialists. This is not the place to assess them. *Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices Made Public Benefits,* by *Mandeville,* one of the early English followers of Locke, is typical of the social tendencies of materialism. He proves that in *modern* society vice is *indispensable* and *useful.* This was by no means an apology of modern society.

Fourier proceeds immediately from the teaching of the French materialists. The *Babouvists* were course, uncivilized materialists, but mature communism too comes *directly* from *French materialism.* The latter returned to its mother-country, *England,* in the form *Helvétius* gave it. *Bentham* based his system of *correctly understood interest* on Helvétius's moral, and *Owen* proceeded from *Bentham's* system to found English communism. Exiled to England, the Frenchman *Cabet* came under the influence of communist ideas there and on his return to France became the most popular, although the most superficial, representative of communism. Like Owen, the more scientific French communists, *Dezamy, Gay,* and others, developed the teaching of *materialism* as the teaching of *real humanism* and the *logical* basis of *communism*. . . .

PREFACE: "A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY" (1859)

In this brief retrospective essay, written more than ten years later (1859), Marx makes clear why it was he gave up on speculative philosophy and turned instead to economic and political analysis.

I examine the system of bourgeois economy in the following order: *capital, landed property, wage-labor; the State, foreign trade, world market.* The economic conditions of existence of the three great classes into which modern bourgeois society in divided are analyzed under the first three headings; the interconnection of the other three headings is self-evident. The first part of the first book, dealing with Capital, comprises the following chapters: 1. The commodity; 2. Money or simple circulation; 3. Capital in general. The present part consists of the first two chapters. The entire material lies before me in the form of monographs, which were written not for publication but for self-clarification at widely separated periods; their remolding into an integrated whole according to the plan I have indicated will depend upon circumstances.

A general introduction, which I had drafted, is omitted, since on further consideration it seems to me confusing to anticipate results which still have to be substantiated, and the reader who really wishes to follow me will have to decide to advance from the particular to the general. A few brief remarks regarding the course of my study of political economy may, however, be appropriate here.

Although I studied jurisprudence, I pursued it as a subject subordinated to philosophy and history. In the year 1842–3, as editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung,* I first found myself in the embarrassing position of having to discuss what is known as material interests. The deliberations of the Rhenish Landtag on forest thefts and the division of landed property; the official polemic started by Herr von Schaper, then Oberpräsident of the Rhine Province, against the *Rheinische Zeitung* about the condition of the Moselle peasantry, and finally the debates on free trade and protective tariffs caused me in the first instance to turn my attention to economic questions. On the other hand, at that time when good intentions "to push forward" often took the place of factual knowledge, an echo of French socialism and communism, slightly tinged by philosophy, was noticeable in the *Rheinische Zeitung.* I objected to this dilettantism, but at the same time frankly admitted in a controversy with the *Allgemeine Augsburger Zeitung* that my previous studies did not allow me to express any opinion on the content of the French theories. When the publishers of the *Rheinische Zeitung* conceived the illusion that by a more compliant policy on the part of the paper it might be possible to secure the abrogation of the death sentence passed upon it, I eagerly grasped the opportunity to withdraw from the public stage to my study.

The first work which I undertook to dispel the doubts assailing me was a critical re-examination of the Hegelian philosophy of law; the introduction to this work being published in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* issued in

Paris in 1844. My inquiry led me to the conclusion that neither legal relations nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves or on the basis of a so-called general development of the human mind, but that on the contrary they originate in the material conditions of life, the totality of which Hegel, following the example of English and French thinkers of the eighteenth century, embraces within the term "civil society"; that the anatomy of this civil society, however, has to be sought in political economy. The study of this, which I began in Paris, I continued in Brussels, where I moved owing to an expulsion order issued by M. Guizot. The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached, became the guiding principle of my studies can be summarized as follows. In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political, and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or—this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms—with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic, or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production. No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society. Mankind thus inevitably sets itself only such

tasks as it is able to solve; since closer examination will always show that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at least in the course of formation. In broad outline, the Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern bourgeois modes of production may be designated as epochs marking progress in the economic development of society. The bourgeois mode of production is the last antagonistic form of the social process of production—antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism but of an antagonism that emanates from the individuals' social conditions of existence—but the productive forces developing within bourgeois society create also the material conditions for a solution of this antagonism. The prehistory of human society accordingly closes with this social formation.

Friedrich Engels, with whom I maintained a constant exchange of ideas by correspondence since the publication of his brilliant essay on the critique of economic categories (printed in the *Deutsch–Französische Jahrbücher*), arrived by another road (compare his *Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* [The Condition of the Working Class in England]) at the same result as I, and when in the spring of 1845 he too came to live in Brussels, we decided to set forth together our conception as opposed to the ideological one of German philosophy, in fact to settle accounts with our former philosophical conscience. The intention was carried out in the form of a critique of post-Hegelian philosophy. The manuscript, two large octavo volumes, had long ago reached the publishers in Westphalia when we were informed that owing to changed circumstances it could not be printed. We abandoned the manuscript to the gnawing criticism of the mice all the more willingly since we had achieved our main purpose—self-clarification. Of the scattered works in which at that time we presented one or another aspect of our views to the public, I shall mention only the *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* jointly written by Engels and myself, and a *Discours sur le libre échange,* which I myself published. The salient points of our conception were first outlined in an academic, although polemical, form in my *Misère de la philosophie* [The Poverty of Philosophy]. This book, which was aimed at Proudhon, appeared in 1847. The publication of an essay on *Wage-Labor* written in German in which I combined the lectures I had held on this subject at the German Workers' Association in Brussels, was interrupted by the February Revolution and my forcible removal from Belgium in consequence.

The publication of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1848 and 1849 and subsequent events cut short my economic studies, which I could only resume in London in 1850. The enormous amount of material relating to the history of political economy assembled in the British Museum, the fact that London is a convenient vantagepoint for the observation of bourgeois society, and finally the new stage of development which this society seemed to have entered with

the discovery of gold in California and Australia, induced me to start again from the very beginning and to work carefully through the new material. These studies led partly of their own accord to apparently quite remote subjects on which I had to spend a certain amount of time. But it was in particular the imperative necessity of earning my living which reduced the time at my disposal. My collaboration, continued now for eight years, with the *New York Tribune*, the leading Anglo-American newspaper, necessitated an excessive fragmentation of my studies, for I wrote only exceptionally newspaper correspondence in the strict sense. Since a considerable part of my contributions consisted of articles dealing with important economic events in Britain and on the Continent, I was compelled to become conversant with practical details which, strictly speaking, lie outside the sphere of political economy.

This sketch of the course of my studies in the domain of political economy is intended merely to show that my views—no matter how they may be judged and how little they conform to the interested prejudices of the ruling classes—are the outcome of conscientious research carried on over many years. At the entrance to science, as at the entrance to hell, the demand must be made:

> Qui si convien lasciare ogni sospetto
> Ogni viltà convien che qui sia morta.[1]

Karl Marx
London, January 1859

Note

1. Dante, *Divine Comedy,* Canto III, lines 14–15: "Here all distrust must be abandoned / here all cowardice must die."

PART III

Bad Work/Good Work

In an anthology dedicated to Marx's writings on religion, why include a section on bad and good work? For Marx, work expresses the human spirit: our human creativity, our suffering, our struggle, and our transcendence. The final product of our work is ourselves as an unfinished and still-evolving species. It is in work that we can see the human spirit at work, even when we can glimpse that spirit only through suffering, through the darkened mirror of estrangement.

The primary documents of Marx on work are his essays on "Estranged Labor" from the Early Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts *(1844) and* The Communist Manifesto *(1848). The first is a difficult read and the second, while easy to read, is a tightly argued text. The essays on money that are also included here begin a discourse on fetishism and the commodification of human values that continues to engage scholars to this day. It is important to note that Marx mostly wrote about* bad *work. We have to infer from his indictment of human labor under the conditions of capitalism what he might mean by good work. And clearly, Marx must address why so many workers do not think of work under capitalism as bad, but instead think of it and experience it as good.*

We have prepared the way for that discussion in the preceding section by examining the dialectic of human consciousness with the already established (but

never finished) material world. Consciousness can become false *consciousness—which is consciousness simply absorbed into and reflecting the givenness of the world, but not critically reflecting upon it, not passionately striving for the "not yet" hidden in the already of that world. We can make this more concrete. Under capitalism, the individual worker struggles to get money, struggles to make a living. At first, the worker does not struggle as part of a class against the power of that peculiar kind of money called* capital, *which decides where factories will be built and where factories will close.*

At first, the consciousness of the worker is enmeshed in the given world and its everyday necessity of competing with other workers to find work. Even when organized into a union, workers will at first identify only with fellow national *workers and against workers in other nations. The result is that, for a while, workers will "fight the enemies of their [class] enemies." They will fight and die in wars declared by the capitalists (for control of lands and markets) whose celebrated victory is always a victory only for capitalists. With victory comes defeat for workers, as capitalists send their investment capital overseas where the work force, under now friendly foreign governments, will work for far cheaper wages.*

Why will the indigenous capitalist class do this? Is it because they are personally evil? No, it is because they must compete with other capitalists, and in that competition discover that, whatever their national loyalties, they must seek again and again lower paid workers wherever those can be found around the world. The iron law of profits—which can only be precariously won in the ongoing warfare of global capitalism—produces both "efficiencies of production" and a highway (ever expanding) of previously employed but now abandoned workers, most of whom will have to find work at lower pay. The hope for Marx in all of this is what he sees as a fatal, internal contradiction in global capitalism: Capitalism needs well-paid workers as consumers to buy its products, but the capitalists cannot afford to pay their workers enough to do so. The result will be "a crisis of overproduction"—a crisis that will create in workers a new consciousness. Marx thought that workers, driven by crisis, would eventually awaken to these international class realities and begin a common struggle.

In "Estranged Labor" Marx analyzes the basic forms of alienated work: (1) loss by the worker of the product (which then becomes a powerful world of commodities the worker must "buy back"); (2) estrangement from the productive process itself (which includes alienation from other workers but also alienation from our extended body, the material world, which is the intimate context of our labor); and (3) estrangement from our "species being" (our "free conscious life activity"), which becomes instead a mere means *for individual survival. In* The Communist Manifesto *Marx gives an astonishing account—written over 150 years ago!—of just how powerful, how utterly transforming of everyday life the capitalist revolution has been and continues to be. It has altered more profoundly in three centuries both the*

means of production and the social relations those means of production create than all the previous millennia of human evolution.

In what will appear to many readers as an extraordinary claim, Marx will begin Chapter I of The Manifesto *with the sentence: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." This is surely not the way our history books are written, nor is it how most of us think about or conceive the past. For Marx, that is not an accident. The written memory of the past is written by the class winners of the past. For a while it was the past of princes and of prelates, of castles and cathedrals–the kinds of things tourists go to see in Europe. Now, history is written as the past of a new ruling class, the class of international bankers and investors, who make material and visible their exploits not in castles or cathedrals but in global shopping malls.*

Much of this talk about class struggle will sound strange. Again, for Marx that is not strange when one considers that the ruling class will always produce "the ruling ideas of an era." The official explanations of "what is going on" will always be the ideological mask of power and privilege. "Upward mobility," "equal opportunity," "in a free country anybody can become somebody"—all these ruling ideas in our society reduce our hopes to those of individuals striving for success and thus blind us to the realities of global class relations. The result is that when competing for work we blame other workers (women, blacks, immigrants, foreign workers) for our suffering, and betray our class solidarities as workers because we don't see the global economic structures that unite us in our suffering.

"Bad Work—Good Work," seemingly out of place in a book focusing upon religion, in fact provides the bridge from Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism to our fourth section on "The Criticism of Religion." For Marx, religion is, at its heart, the expression of and protest against suffering. And bad work produces suffering. And the dream of better work, which provides hope at first, only deepens that suffering.

PREFACE, "EARLY ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC MANUSCRIPTS" (1844)

In the *Deutsch–Französische Jahrbücher* I announced a critique of jurisprudence and political science in the form of a critique of the *Hegelian* philosophy of right. While preparing this for publication, I found that to combine criticism directed only against speculation with criticism of the various subjects themselves was quite unsuitable; it hampered the development of the argument and made it more difficult to follow. Moreover, the wealth and

diversity of the subjects to be dealt with would have fitted into *a single* work only if I had written in aphorisms, and an aphoristic presentation, for its part, would have given the *impression* of arbitrary systematization. I shall therefore publish the critique of law, morals, politics, etc., in a series of separate, independent pamphlets and finally attempt, in a special work, to present them once again as a connected whole, to show the relationship between the parts and to try to provide a critique of the speculative treatment of the material. That is why the present work only touches on the interconnection of political economy and the state, law, morals, civil life, etc., in so far as political economy itself particularly touches on these subjects.

It is hardly necessary to assure the reader who is familiar with political economy that I arrived at my conclusions through an entirely empirical analysis based on an exhaustive critical study of political economy.

It goes without saying that I have made use of German socialist works in addition to the French and English socialists. But the only *original* German works of any interest in this field—apart from those by Weitling—are the essays by Hess in *Einundzwanzig Bogen* and Engels' *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy* in the *Deutsch–Französische Jahrbücher*; in the last-mentioned publication I too indicated in a very general way the basic elements of the present work.

It is only with *Feuerbach* that *positive* humanistic and naturalistic criticism begins. The less strident his writings are, the more certain, profound, comprehensive, and lasting is their influence; they are the only writings since Hegel's *Phenomenology* and *Logic* to contain a real theoretical revolution.

In contrast to the *critical* theologians [Bruno Bauer et al.] of our time, I considered the concluding chapter of the present work (a critical analysis of the *Hegelian dialectic* and Hegelian philosophy in general) to be essential, since such a task has not yet been completed. Their *failure to go to the root of the matter* is inevitable, since even the *critical* theologian is still a theologian. Either he must start out from certain presuppositions of philosophy which he considers authoritative or, if in the process of criticism and as a result of other people's discoveries he begins to doubt these philosophical presuppositions, he abandons them in a cowardly and indefensible way, he *abstracts* from them and he demonstrates his enthralment to them and his resentment of this enthralment purely in a negative, unconscious, and sophistical way.

On close investigation *theological criticism*, although it was a truly progressive factor at the beginning of the movement, is in the final analysis nothing more than the culmination and consequence of the old *philosophical*, and especially *Hegelian, transcendence* distorted into a *theological caricature*. Elsewhere I shall describe in detail this interesting example of historical justice,

this Nemesis, which has now burdened theology—always philosophy's sore point—with the additional task of portraying in itself the negative dissolution of philosophy, i.e. its process of decay.

"ESTRANGED LABOR" (1844)

With these next writings Marx establishes the battleground upon which he will oppose classical British political economy. John Locke and Adam Smith both announced and defended the capitalist revolution, a revolution that now embraces and steers the world. These essays by the young Marx present to the reader the most fundamental criticism yet made of that way of organizing human life. When put together with The Communist Manifesto *which follows, we find before us a denunciation of capitalists as a rootless ruling class chasing around the world to find the cheapest workers. We find, therefore, the inevitability of class struggle as workers at first collide with other workers in the struggle to find work and then discover that their mutual enemy is capital, i.e., that particular kind of money that decides where factories will close and where factories will open. We find the idea of fetishism, the turning of all values (including the value of human persons) into the value assigned to commodities in the market. And we find the extraordinary claim that under the conditions of global capitalism there is in reality only one kind of freedom—Free Trade—a freedom that reduces all other freedoms to a function of itself.*

We have started out from the premises of political economy. We have accepted its language and its laws. We presupposed private property; the separation of labor, capital, and land, and likewise of wages, profit, and capital; the division of labor; competition; the concept of exchange value, etc. From political economy itself, using its own words, we have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity, and moreover the most wretched commodity of all; that the misery of the worker is in inverse proportion to the power and volume of his production; that the necessary consequence of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands and hence the restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form; and that finally the distinction between capitalist and landlord, between agricultural worker and industrial worker, disappears and the whole of society must split into the two classes of *property owners* and propertyless *workers*.

Political economy proceeds from the fact of private property. It does not explain it. It grasps the *material* process of private property, the process through which it actually passes, in general and abstract formulae which it then takes as *laws*. It does not *comprehend* these laws, i.e. it does not show how they arise from the nature of private property. Political economy fails to explain the reason for the division between labor and capital, between capital and land. For example, when it defines the relation of wages to profit it takes the interests of the capitalists as the basis of its analysis; i.e. it assumes what it is supposed to explain. Similarly, competition is frequently brought into the argument and explained in terms of external circumstances. Political economy teaches us nothing about the extent to which these external and apparently accidental circumstances are only the expression of a necessary development. We have seen how exchange itself appears to political economy as an accidental fact. The only wheels which political economy sets in motion are *greed* and the *war of the avaricious—competition.*

Precisely because political economy fails to grasp the interconnections within the movement, it was possible to oppose, for example, the doctrine of competition to the doctrine of monopoly, the doctrine of craft freedom to the doctrine of the guild, and the doctrine of the division of landed property to the doctrine of the great estate; for competition, craft freedom, and division of landed property were developed and conceived only as accidental, deliberate, violent consequences of monopoly, of the guilds and of feudal property and not as their necessary, inevitable, and natural consequences.

We now have to grasp the essential connection between private property, greed, the separation of labor, capital, and landed property, exchange and competition, value and the devaluation [*Entwertung*] of man, monopoly, and competition, etc.—the connection between this entire system of estrangement [*Entfremdung*] and the *money* system.

We must avoid repeating the mistake of the political economist, who bases his explanations on some imaginary primordial condition. Such a primordial condition explains nothing. It simply pushes the question into the grey and nebulous distance. It assumes as facts and events what it is supposed to deduce, namely the necessary relationship between two things, between, for example, the division of labor and exchange. Similarly, theology explains the origin of evil by the fall of man, i.e. it assumes as a fact in the form of history what it should explain.

We shall start out from a *present-day* economic fact.

The worker becomes poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and extent. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he produces. The *devaluation* of

the human world grows in direct proportion to the *increase in value* of the world of things. Labor not only produces commodities; it also produces itself and the workers as a *commodity* and it does so in the same proportion in which it produces commodities in general.

This fact simply means that the object that labor produces, its product, stands opposed to it as *something alien,* as a *power independent* of the producer. The product of labor is labor embodied and made material in an object, it is the *objectification* of labor. The realization of labor is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy this realization of labor appears as a *loss of reality* for the worker, objectification as *loss of and bondage to the object,* and appropriation as *estrangement,* as *alienation* [*Entäusserung*].

So much does the realization of labor appear as loss of reality that the worker loses his reality to the point of dying of starvation. So much does objectification appear as loss of the object that the worker is robbed of the objects he needs most not only for life but also for work. Work itself becomes an object which he can only obtain through an enormous effort and with spasmodic interruptions. So much does the appropriation of the object appear as estrangement that the more objects the worker produces the fewer can he possess and the more he falls under the domination of his product, of capital.

All these consequences are contained in this characteristic, that the worker is related to the *product of his labor* as to an *alien* object. For it is clear that, according to this premise, the more the worker exerts himself in his work, the more powerful the alien, objective world becomes which he brings into being over against himself, the poorer he and his inner world become, and the less they belong to him. It is the same in religion. The more man puts into God, the less he retains within himself. The worker places his life in the object; but now it no longer belongs to him, but to the object. The greater his activity, therefore, the fewer objects the worker possesses. What the product of his labor is, he is not. Therefore, the greater this product, the less is he himself. The externalization [*Entäusserung*] of the worker in his product means not only that his labor becomes an object, an *external* existence, but that it exists *outside him,* independently of him and alien to him, and begins to confront him as an autonomous power; that the life which he has bestowed on the object confronts him as hostile and alien.

Let us now take a closer look at *objectification,* at the production of the worker, and the *estrangement,* the *loss* of the object, of his product, that this entails.

The worker can create nothing without *nature,* without the *sensuous external world.* It is the material in which his labor realizes itself, in which it is active and from which and by means of which it produces.

But just as nature provides labor with the *means of life* in the sense that labor cannot *live* without objects on which to exercise itself, so also it provides the *means of life* in the narrower sense, namely the means of physical subsistence of the *worker.*

The more the worker *appropriates* the external world, sensuous nature, through his labor, the more he deprives himself of the *means of life* in two respects: firstly, the sensuous external world becomes less and less an object belonging to his labor, a *means of life* of his labor; and secondly, it becomes less and less a *means of life* in the immediate sense, a means for the physical subsistence of the worker.

In these two respects, then, the worker becomes a slave of his object; firstly in that he receives an *object of labor,* i.e. he receives work, and secondly in that he receives *means of subsistence.* Firstly, then, so that he can exist as a *worker,* and secondly as a *physical subject.* The culmination of this slavery is that it is only as a *worker* that he can maintain himself as a *physical subject* and only as a *physical subject* that he is a worker.

(The estrangement of the worker in his object is expressed according to the laws of political economy in the following way: the more the worker produces, the less he has to consume; the more values he creates, the more worthless he becomes; the more his product is shaped, the more misshapen the worker; the more civilized his object, the more barbarous the worker; the more powerful the work, the more powerless the worker; the more intelligent the work, the duller the worker and the more he becomes a slave of nature.)

Political economy conceals the estrangement in the nature of labor by ignoring the direct relationship between the worker (labor) *and production.* It is true that labor produces marvels for the rich, but it produces privation for the worker. It produces palaces, but hovels for the worker. It produces beauty, but deformity for the worker. It replaces labor by machines, but it casts some of the workers back into barbarous forms of labor and turns others into machines. It produces intelligence, but it produces idiocy and cretinism for the worker.

The direct relationship of labor to its products is the relationship of the worker to the objects of his production. The relationship of the rich man to the objects of production and to production itself is only a *consequence* of this first relationship, and confirms it. Later we shall consider this second aspect. Therefore when we ask what is the essential relationship of labor, we are asking about the relationship of the worker to production.

Up to now we have considered the estrangement, the alienation of the worker only from one aspect, i.e. his *relationship to the products of his labor.* But estrangement manifests itself not only in the result, but also in the *act of production,* within the *activity of production* itself. How could the product of the

worker's activity confront him as something alien if it were not for the fact that in the act of production he was estranging himself from himself? After all, the product is simply the résumé of the activity, of the production. So if the product of labor is alienation, production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation. The estrangement of the object of labor merely summarizes the estrangement, the alienation in the activity of labor itself.

What constitutes the alienation of labor?

Firstly, the fact that labor is *external* to the worker, i.e. does not belong to his essential being; that he therefore does not confirm himself in his work, but denies himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh and ruins his mind. Hence the worker feels himself only when he is not working; when he is working he does not feel himself. He is at home when he is not working, and not at home when he is working. His labor is therefore not voluntary but forced, it is *forced labor.* It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need but a mere *means* to satisfy needs outside itself. Its alien character is clearly demonstrated by the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists it is shunned like the plague. External labor, labor in which man alienates himself, is a labor of self-sacrifice, of mortification. Finally, the external character of labor for the worker is demonstrated by the fact that it belongs not to him but to another, and that in it he belongs not to himself but to another. Just as in religion the spontaneous activity of the human imagination, the human brain, and the human heart detaches itself from the individual and reappears as the alien activity of a god or of a devil, so the activity of the worker is not his own spontaneous activity. It belongs to another, it is a loss of his self.

The result is that man (the worker) feels that he is acting freely only in his animal functions—eating, drinking, and procreating, or at most in his dwelling and adornment—while in his human functions he is nothing more than an animal.

It is true that eating, drinking, and procreating, etc., are also genuine human functions. However, when abstracted from other aspects of human activity and turned into final and exclusive ends, they are animal.

We have considered the act of estrangement of practical human activity, of labor, from two aspects: (1) the relationship of the worker to the *product of labor* as an alien object that has power over him. This relationship is at the same time the relationship to the sensuous external world, to natural objects, as an alien world confronting him in hostile opposition. (2) The relationship of labor to the *act of production* within *labor.* This relationship is the relationship of the worker to his own activity as something which is alien and does

not belong to him, activity as passivity [*Leiden*], power as impotence, procreation as emasculation, the worker's *own* physical and mental energy, his personal life—for what is life but activity?—as an activity directed against himself, which is independent of him and does not belong to him. *Self-estrangement,* as compared with the estrangement of the *object* [*Sache*] mentioned above.

We now have to derive a third feature of *estranged labor* from the two we have already looked at.

Man is a species-being, not only because he practically and theoretically makes the species—both his own and those of other things—his object, but also (and this is simply another way of saying the same thing) because he looks upon himself as the present, living species, because he looks upon himself as a *universal* and therefore free being.

Species-life, both for man and for animals, consists physically in the fact that man, like animals, lives from inorganic nature; and because man is more universal than animals, so too is the area of inorganic nature from which he lives more universal. Just as plants, animals, stones, air, light, etc., theoretically form a part of human consciousness, partly as objects of science and partly as objects of art—his spiritual inorganic nature, his spiritual means of life, which he must first prepare before he can enjoy and digest them—so too in practice they form a part of human life and human activity. In a physical sense man lives only from these natural products, whether in the form of nourishment, heating, clothing, shelter, etc. The universality of man manifests itself in practice in that universality which makes the whole of nature his *inorganic* body, (1) as a direct means of life and (2) as the matter, the object, and the tool of his life activity. Nature is man's *inorganic body,* that is to say nature in so far as it is not the human body. Man *lives* from nature, i.e. nature is his *body,* and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die. To say that man's physical and mental life is linked to nature simply means that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature.

Estranged labor not only (1) estranges nature from man and (2) estranges man from himself, from his own active function, from his vital activity; because of this it also estranges man from his *species.* It turns his *species-life* into a means for his individual life. Firstly it estranges species-life and individual life, and secondly it turns the latter, in its abstract form, into the purpose of the former, also in its abstract and estranged form.

For in the first place labor, *life activity, productive life* itself appears to man only as a *means* for the satisfaction of a need, the need to preserve physical existence. But productive life is species-life. It is life-producing life. The whole character of a species, its species-character, resides in the nature of its life

activity, and free conscious activity constitutes the species-character of man. Life itself appears only as a *means of life*.

The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It is not distinct from that activity; it *is* that activity. Man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life activity directly distinguishes man from animal life activity. Only because of that is he a species-being. Or rather, he is a conscious being, i.e. his own life is an object for him, only because he is a species-being. Only because of that is his activity free activity. Estranged labor reverses the relationship so that man, just because he is a conscious being, makes his life activity, his *being* [*Wesen*], a mere means for his *existence*.

The practical creation of an *objective world*, the *fashioning* of inorganic nature, is proof that man is a conscious species-being, i.e. a being which treats the species as its own essential being or itself as a species-being. It is true that animals also produce. They build nests and dwellings, like the bee, the beaver, the ant, etc. But they produce only their own immediate needs or those of their young; they produce one-sidedly, while man produces universally; they produce only when immediate physical need compels them to do so, while man produces even when he is free from physical need and truly produces only in freedom from such need; they produce only themselves, while man reproduces the whole of nature; their products belong immediately to their physical bodies, while man freely confronts his own product. Animals produce only according to the standards and needs of the species to which they belong, while man is capable of producing according to the standards of every species and of applying to each object its inherent standard; hence man also produces in accordance with the laws of beauty.

It is therefore in his fashioning of the objective that man really proves himself to be a *species-being*. Such production is his active species-life. Through it nature appears as *his* work and his reality. The object of labor is therefore the *objectification of the species-life of man*: for man reproduces himself not only intellectually, in his consciousness, but actively and actually, and he can therefore contemplate himself in a world he himself has created. In tearing away the object of his production from man, estranged labor therefore tears away from him his *species-life*, his true species-objectivity, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him.

In the same way as estranged labor reduces spontaneous and free activity to a means, it makes man's species-life a means of his physical existence.

Consciousness, which man has from his species, is transformed through estrangement so that species-life becomes a means for him.

(3) Estranged labor therefore turns *man's species-being*—both nature and his intellectual species-powers—into a being *alien* to him and a *means* of his *individual existence.* It estranges man from his own body, from nature as it exists outside him, from his spiritual essence [*Wesen*], his *human* essence.

(4) An immediate consequence of man's estrangement from the product of his labor, his life activity, his species-being, is the *estrangement of man from man.* When man confronts himself, he also confronts *other* men. What is true of man's relationship to his labor, to the product of his labor, and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, and to the labor and the object of the labor of other men.

In general, the proposition that man is estranged from his species-being means that each man is estranged from the others and that all are estranged from man's essence.

Man's estrangement, like all relationships of man to himself, is realized and expressed only in man's relationship to other men.

In the relationship of estranged labor each man therefore regards the other in accordance with the standard and the situation in which he as a worker finds himself.

We started out from an economic fact, the estrangement of the worker and of his production. We gave this fact conceptual form: *estranged, alienated* labor. We have analyzed this concept, and in so doing merely analyzed an economic fact.

Let us now go on to see how the concept of estranged, alienated labor must express and present itself in reality.

If the product of labor is alien to me and confronts me as an alien power, to whom does it then belong?

To a being *other* than me.

Who is this being?

The *gods*? It is true that in early times most production—e.g. temple building, etc., in Egypt, India, and Mexico—was in the service of the gods, just as the product belonged to the gods. But the gods alone were never the masters of labor. The same is true of *nature*. And what a paradox it would be if the more man subjugates nature through his labor and the more divine miracles are made superfluous by the miracles of industry, the more he is forced to forgo the joy of production and the enjoyment of the product out of deference to these powers.

The *alien* being to whom labor and the product of labor belong, in whose service labor is performed and for whose enjoyment the product of labor is created, can be none other than *man* himself.

If the product of labor does not belong to the worker, and if it confronts him as an alien power, this is only possible because it belongs to *a man other than the worker.* If his activity is a torment for him, it must provide *pleasure* and enjoyment for someone else. Not the gods, not nature, but only man himself can be this alien power over men.

Consider the above proposition that the relationship of man to himself becomes *objective* and *real* for him only through his relationship to other men. If therefore he regards the product of his labor, his objectified labor, as an *alien, hostile,* and powerful object which is independent of him, then his relationship to that object is such that another man—alien, hostile, powerful, and independent of him—is its master. If he relates to his own activity as unfree activity, then he relates to it as activity in the service, under the rule, coercion, and yoke of another man.

Every self-estrangement of man from himself and nature is manifested in the relationship he sets up between other men and himself and nature. Thus religious self-estrangement is necessarily manifested in the relationship between layman and priest, or, since we are here dealing with the spiritual world, between layman and mediator, etc. In the practical, real world, self-estrangement can manifest itself only in the practical, real relationship to other men. The medium through which estrangement progresses is itself a *practical* one. So through estranged labor man not only produces his relationship to the object and to the act of production as to alien and hostile powers; he also produces the relationship in which other men stand to his production and product, and the relationship in which he stands to these other men. Just as he creates his own production as a loss of reality, a punishment, and his own product as a loss, a product which does not belong to him, so he creates the domination of the non-producer over production and its product. Just as he estranges from himself his own activity, so he confers upon the stranger an activity which does not belong to him.

Up to now we have considered the relationship only from the side of the worker. Later on we shall consider it from the side of the non-worker.

Thus through *estranged, alienated labor* the worker creates the relationship of another man, who is alien to labor and stands outside it, to that labor. The relation of the worker to labor creates the relation of the capitalist—or whatever other word one chooses for the master of labor—to that labor. *Private property* is therefore the product, result, and necessary consequence of *alienated labor,* of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself.

Private property thus derives from an analysis of the concept of *alienated labor,* i.e. *alienated man,* estranged labor, estranged life, *estranged man.*

It is true that we took the concept of *alienated labor* (*alienated life*) from political economy as a result of the *movement of private property.* But it is clear from an analysis of this concept that, although private property appears as the basis and cause of alienated labor, it is in fact its consequence, just as the gods were *originally* not the cause but the effect of the confusion in men's minds. Later, however, this relationship becomes reciprocal.

It is only when the development of private property reaches its ultimate point of culmination that this, its secret, re-emerges: namely, that it is (a) the *product* of alienated labor and (b) the *means* through which labor is alienated, the *realization of this alienation.*

This development throws light upon a number of hitherto unresolved controversies.

(1) Political economy starts out from labor as the real soul of production, and yet gives nothing to labor and everything to private property. Proudhon has dealt with this contradiction by deciding for labor and against private property. But we have seen that this apparent contradiction is the contradiction of *estranged labor* with itself and that political economy has merely formulated the laws of estranged labor.

It therefore follows for us that *wages* and *private property* are identical: for where the product, the object of labor, pays for the labor itself, wages are only a necessary consequence of the estrangement of labor; similarly, where wages are concerned, labor appears not as an end in itself but as the servant of wages. We intend to deal with this point in more detail later on: for the present we shall merely draw a few conclusions.

An enforced *rise in wages* (disregarding all other difficulties, including the fact that such an anomalous situation could only be prolonged by force) would therefore be nothing more than better *pay for slaves* and would not mean an increase in human significance or dignity for either the worker or the labor.

Even the *equality of wages,* which Proudhon demands, would merely transform the relation of the present-day worker to his work into the relation of all men to work. Society would then be conceived as an abstract capitalist.

Wages are an immediate consequence of estranged labor, and estranged labor is the immediate cause of private property. If the one falls, then the other must fall too.

(2) It further follows from the relation of estranged labor to private property that the emancipation of society from private property, etc., from servitude, is expressed in the *political* form of the *emancipation of the workers.* This is not because it is only a question of their emancipation, but because in their emancipation is contained universal human emancipation. The reason for this universality is that the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation

of the worker to production, and all relations of servitude are nothing but modifications and consequences of this relation.

Just as we have arrived at the concept of *private property* through an *analysis* of the concept of *estranged, alienated labor,* so with the help of these two factors it is possible to evolve all economic *categories,* and in each of these categories, e.g. trade, competition, capital, money, we shall identify only a *particular* and *developed expression* of these basic constituents.

But before we go on to consider this configuration let us try to solve two further problems.

(1) We have to determine the general *nature of private property,* as it has arisen out of estranged labor, in its relation to *truly human* and *social property.*

(2) We have taken the *estrangement of labor,* its *alienation,* as a fact and we have analyzed that fact. How, we now ask, does *man* come *to alienate his labor,* to estrange it? How is this estrangement founded in the nature of human development? We have already gone a long way towards solving this problem by *transforming* the question of the *origin* of *private property* into the question of the relationship of *alienated labor* to the course of human development. For in speaking of *private property* one imagines that one is dealing with something external to man. In speaking of labor one is dealing immediately with man himself. This new way of formulating the problem already contains its solution.

ad (1): The general nature of private property and its relationship to truly human property.

Alienated labor has resolved itself for us into two component parts which mutually condition one another, or which are merely different expressions of one and the same relationship. *Appropriation* appears as *estrangement,* as *alienation*; and *alienation* appears as *appropriation, estrangement* as true *admission to citizenship.*

We have considered the one aspect, *alienated* labor, in relation to the *worker* himself, i.e. the *relation of alienated labor to itself.* And as product, as necessary consequence of this relationship we have found the *property relation of the non-worker* to the *worker and to labor. Private property* as the material, summarized expression of alienated labor embraces both relations—the *relation of the worker to labor and to the product of his labor and the non-worker* and the relation of the *non-worker to the worker* and to *the product of his labor.*

We have already seen that, in relation to the worker who *appropriates* nature through his labor, appropriation appears as estrangement, self-activity as activity for another and of another, vitality as a sacrifice of life, production of an object as loss of that object to an alien power, to an *alien* man. Let us now consider the relation between this man, who is *alien* to labor and to the worker, and the worker, labor, and the object of labor.

The first thing to point out is that everything which appears for the worker as an *activity of alienation, of estrangement,* appears for the non-worker as a *situation of alienation, of estrangement.*

Secondly, the *real, practical attitude* of the worker in production and to the product (as a state of mind) appears for the non-worker who confronts him as a *theoretical* attitude.

Thirdly, the non-worker does everything against the worker which the worker does against himself, but he does not do against himself what he does against the worker.

"PRIVATE PROPERTY AND COMMUNISM" (1844)

The antithesis between *propertylessness* and *property* is still an indifferent antithesis, not grasped in its *active connection,* its *inner* relation, not yet grasped as *contradiction,* as long as it is not understood as the antithesis between *labor* and *capital.* In its initial form this antithesis can manifest itself even without the advanced development of private property, as for example in ancient Rome, in Turkey, etc. In such cases it does not yet *appear* as established by private property itself. But labor, the subjective essence of private property as exclusion of property, and capital, objective labor as exclusion of labor, constitute *private property* in its developed relation of contradiction: a vigorous relation, therefore, driving towards resolution.

The supersession [*Aufhebung*] of self-estrangement follows the same course as self-estrangement. *Private property* is first considered only in its objective aspect, but still with labor as its essence. Its form of existence is therefore *capital,* which is to be abolished "as such" (Proudhon). Or the *particular form* of labor—leveled down, parceled, and therefore unfree—is taken as the source of the *harmfulness* of private property and its humanly estranged existence. For example, Fourier, like the Physiocrats, regarded agriculture as at least the *best* form of labor, while Saint-Simon on the other hand declared *industrial labor* as such to be the essence and consequently wants *exclusive* rule by the industrialists and the improvement of the condition of the workers. Finally, *communism*[1] is the *positive* expression of the abolition of private property and at first appears as *universal* private property. In grasping this relation in its *universality,* communism is

(1) in its initial form only a *generalization* and *completion* of that relation (of private property). As such it appears in a dual form: on the one hand the domination of *material* property bulks so large that it threatens to destroy

everything which is not capable of being possessed by everyone as private property; it wants to abstract from talent, etc., by *force*. Physical, immediate *possession* is the only purpose of life and existence as far as this communism is concerned; the category of *worker* is not abolished but extended to all men; the relation of private property remains the relation of the community to the world of things; ultimately this movement to oppose universal private property to private property is expressed in bestial form—*marriage* (which is admittedly a *form* of *exclusive private property*) is counterposed to the *community of women*, where women become *communal* and *common* property. One might say that this idea of a *community of women* is the *revealed secret* of this as yet wholly crude and unthinking communism. Just as women are to go from marriage into general prostitution, so the whole world of wealth—i.e. the objective essence of man—is to make the transition from the relation of exclusive marriage with the private owner to the relation of universal prostitution with the community. This communism, inasmuch as it negates the *personality* of man in every sphere, is simply the logical expression of the private property which is this negation. Universal *envy* constituting itself as a power is the hidden form in which *greed* reasserts itself and satisfies itself, but in *another* way. The thoughts of every piece of private property as such are *at least* turned against *richer* private property in the form of envy and the desire to level everything down; hence these feelings in fact constitute the essence of competition. The crude communist is merely the culmination of this envy and desire to level down on the basis of a *preconceived* minimum. It has a *definite, limited* measure. How little this abolition of private property is a true appropriation is shown by the abstract negation of the entire world of culture and civilization, and the return to the *unnatural* simplicity of the *poor,* unrefined man who has no needs and who has not even reached the stage of private property, let alone gone beyond it.

(For crude communism) the community is simply a community of *labor* and equality of *wages,* which are paid out by the communal capital, the *community* as universal capitalist. Both sides of the relation are raised to an *imaginary* universality—*labor* as the condition in which everyone is placed and *capital* as the acknowledged universality and power of the community.

In the relationship with *woman,* as the *prey* and handmaid of communal lust, is expressed the infinite degradation in which man exists for himself, for the secret of this relationship has its *unambiguous* decisive, *open,* and revealed expression in the relationship of *man* to *woman* and in the manner in which the *direct, natural* species-relationship is conceived. The immediate, natural, necessary relation of human being to human being is the *relationship* of *man* to *woman.* In this *natural* species-relationship the relation of man to nature is

immediately his relation to man, just as his relation to man is immediately his relation to nature, his own *natural* condition. Therefore this relationship *reveals* in a *sensuous* form, reduced to an observable *fact*, the extent to which the human essence has become nature for man or nature has become the human essence for man. It is possible to judge from this relationship the entire level of development of mankind. It follows from the character of this relationship how far *man* as a *species-being*, as *man*, has become himself and grasped himself; the relation of man to woman is the most *natural* relation of human being to human being. It therefore demonstrates the extent to which man's *natural* behavior has become *human* or the extent to which his *human* essence has become a *natural* essence for him, the extent to which his *human nature* has become *nature* for him. This relationship also demonstrates the extent to which man's *needs* have become *human* needs, hence the extent to which the *other*, as a human being, has become a need for him, the extent to which in his most individual existence he is at the same time a communal being.

The first positive abolition of private property—*crude* communism—is therefore only a *manifestation* of the vileness of private property trying to establish itself as the *positive community*.

(2) Communism (a) still of a political nature, democratic or despotic; (b) with the abolition of the state, but still essentially incomplete and influenced by private property, i.e. by the estrangement of man. In both forms communism already knows itself as the reintegration or return of man into himself, the supersession of man's self-estrangement; but since it has not yet comprehended the positive essence of private property or understood the *human* nature of need, it is still held captive and contaminated by private property. True, it has understood its concept, but not yet its essence.

(3) *Communism*[2] is the *positive* supersession of *private property* as *human self-estrangement*, and hence the true *appropriation* of the *human* essence through and for man; it is the complete restoration of man to himself as a *social*, i.e. human, being, a restoration which has become conscious and which takes place within the entire wealth of previous periods of development. This communism, as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the *genuine* resolution of the conflict between man and nature, and between man and man, the true resolution of the conflict between existence and being, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be the solution.

The entire movement of history is therefore both the *actual* act of creation of communism—the birth of its empirical existence—and, for its thinking consciousness, the *comprehended* and *known* movement of its *becoming*; whereas

the other communism, which is not yet fully developed, seeks in isolated historical forms opposed to private property a historical proof for itself, a proof drawn from what already exists, by wrenching isolated moments from their proper places in the process of development (a hobby horse Cabet, Villegardelle, etc., particularly like to ride) and advancing them as proofs of its historical pedigree. But all it succeeds in showing is that by far the greater part of this development contradicts its assertions and that if it did once exist, then the very fact that it existed in the *past* refutes its claim to *essential being* [*Wesen*].

It is easy to see how necessary it is for the whole revolutionary movement to find both its empirical and its theoretical basis in the movement of *private property* or, to be more exact, of the economy.

This *material,* immediately *sensuous* private property is the material, sensuous expression of *estranged human* life. Its movement—production and consumption—is the sensuous revelation of the movement of all previous production, i.e. the realization or reality of man. Religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only *particular* modes of production and therefore come under its general law. The positive supersession of *private property,* as the appropriation of *human* life, is therefore the positive supersession of all estrangement, and the return of man from religion, the family, the state, etc., to his *human,* i.e. *social* existence. Religious estrangement as such takes place only in the sphere *of consciousness,* of man's inner life, but economic estrangement is that of *real life*—its supersession therefore embraces both aspects. Clearly the nature of the movement in different countries initially depends on whether the actual and *acknowledged* life of the people has its being more in consciousness or in the external world, in ideal or in real life. Communism begins with atheism (Owen), but atheism is initially far from being *communism,* and is for the most part an abstraction. The philanthropy of atheism is therefore at first nothing more than an abstract *philosophical* philanthropy, while that of communism is at once *real* and directly bent towards *action.*

We have seen how, assuming the positive supersession of private property, man produces man, himself and other men; how the object, which is the direct activity of his individuality, is at the same time his existence for other men, their existence, and their existence for him. Similarly, however, both the material of labor and man as subject are the starting-point as well as the outcome of the movement (and the historical *necessity* of private property lies precisely in the fact that they must be this starting-point). So the *social* character is the general character of the whole movement; *just as* society itself produces *man* as *man,* so it is *produced* by him. Activity and consumption, both in their content and in their *mode of existence,* are *social* activity and *social* consumption. The *human*

essence of nature exists only for *social* man; for only here does nature exist for him as a *bond* with other *men,* as his existence for others and their existence for him, as the vital element of human reality; only here does it exist as the *basis* of his own *human* existence. Only here has his *natural* existence become his *human* existence and nature become man for him. *Society* is therefore the perfected unity in essence of man with nature, the true resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature.[3]

Social activity and social consumption by no means exist *solely* in the form of a *directly* communal activity and a directly *communal* consumption, even though *communal* activity and *communal* consumption, i.e. activity and consumption that express and confirm themselves directly in *real association* with other men, occur wherever that *direct* expression of sociality [*Gesellschaftlichkeit*] springs from the essential nature of the content of the activity and is appropriate to the nature of the consumption.

But even if I am active in the field of science, etc.—an activity which I am seldom able to perform in direct association with other men—I am still *socially* active because I am active as a *man.* It is not only the material of my activity—including even the language in which the thinker is active—which I receive as a social product. My *own* existence *is* social activity. Therefore what I create from myself I create for society, conscious of myself as a social being.

My *universal* consciousness is only the *theoretical* form of that whose *living* form is the *real* community, society, whereas at present *universal* consciousness is an abstraction from real life and as such in hostile opposition to it. Hence the *activity* of my universal consciousness—as activity—is my *theoretical* existence as a social being.

It is above all necessary to avoid once more establishing "society" as an abstraction over against the individual. The individual *is* the *social being.* His vital expression—even when it does not appear in the direct form of a *communal* expression, conceived in association with other men—is therefore an expression and confirmation of *social life.* Man's individual and species-life are not two *distinct things,* however much—and this is necessarily so—the mode of existence of individual life is a more *particular* or a more *general* mode of the species-life, or species-life a more *particular* or more *general* individual life.

As *species-consciousness* man confirms his real *social life* and merely repeats in thought his actual existence; conversely, species-being confirms itself in species-consciousness and exists for itself in its universality, as a thinking being.

Man, however much he may therefore be a *particular* individual—and it is just this particularity which makes him an individual and a real *individual* communal being—is just as much the *totality,* the ideal totality, the subjective

existence of thought and experienced society for itself; he also exists in reality as the contemplation and true enjoyment of social existence and as a totality of vital human expression.

It is true that thought and being are *distinct*, but at the same time they are in *unity* with one another.

Death appears as the harsh victory of the species over the particular individual, and seemingly contradicts their unity; but the particular individual is only a *particular species-being*, and as such mortal.

(4) Just as *private property* is only the sensuous expression of the fact that man becomes *objective* for himself and at the same time becomes an alien and inhuman object for himself, that his expression of life [*Lebensäusserung*] is his alienation of life [*Lebensentäusserung*], and that his realization is a loss of reality, an *alien* reality, so the positive supersession of private property, i.e. the *sensuous* appropriation of the human essence and human life, of objective man and of human *works* by and for man, should not be understood only in the sense of *direct*, one-sided *consumption*, of *possession*, of *having*. Man appropriates his integral essence in an integral way, as a total man. All his *human* relations to the world—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, contemplating, sensing, wanting, acting, loving—in short, all the organs of his individuality, like the organs which are directly communal in form, are in their *objective* approach or in their *approach to the object* the appropriation of that object. This appropriation of *human* reality, their approach to the object, is the *confirmation of human reality.*[4] It is human *effectiveness* and human *suffering*, for suffering, humanly conceived, is an enjoyment of the self for man.

Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only *ours* when we have it, when it exists for us as capital or when we directly possess, eat, drink, wear, inhabit it, etc., in short, when we *use* it. Although private property conceives all these immediate realizations of possession only as *means of life*; and the life they serve is the *life* of *private property*, labor, and capitalization.

Therefore *all* the physical and intellectual senses have been replaced by the simple estrangement of *all* these senses—the sense of *having*. So that it might give birth to its inner wealth, human nature had to be reduced to this absolute poverty.

The supersession of private property is therefore the complete *emancipation* of all human senses and attributes; but it is this emancipation precisely because these senses and attributes have become *human*, subjectively as well as objectively. The eye has become a *human* eye, just as its *object* has become a social, *human* object, made by man for man. The *senses* have therefore become *theoreticians* in their immediate praxis. They relate to the *thing* for its own

sake, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man,[5] and vice-versa. Need or enjoyment have therefore lost their *egoistic* nature, and nature has lost its mere *utility* in the sense that its use has become *human* use.

Similarly, the senses and enjoyment of other men have become my *own* appropriation. Apart from these direct organs, *social* organs are therefore created in the *form* of society; for example, activity in direct association with others, etc. has become an organ of my *life expression* and a mode of appropriation of *human* life.

Obviously the *human* eye takes in things in a different way from the crude non-human eye, the human *ear* in a different way from the crude ear, etc.

To sum up: it is only when man's object becomes a *human* object or objective man that man does not lose himself in that object. This is only possible when it becomes a *social* object for him and when he himself becomes a social being for himself, just as society becomes a being for him in this object.

On the one hand, therefore, it is only when objective reality universally becomes for man in society the reality of man's essential powers, becomes human reality, and thus the reality of his *own* essential powers, that all *objects* become for him the *objectification of himself,* objects that confirm and realize his individuality, *his* objects, i.e. *he himself* becomes the object. The *manner* in which they become his depends on the *nature* of the *object* and the nature of the *essential power* that corresponds to *it*; for it is just the *determinateness* of this relation that constitutes the particular, *real* mode of affirmation. An object is different for the *eye* from what it is for the *ear,* and the eye's object *is* different from the *ear's*. The peculiarity of each essential power is precisely its *peculiar essence,* and thus also the peculiar mode of its objectification, of its *objectively real,* living *being*. Man is therefore affirmed in the objective world not only in thought but with *all* the senses.

On the other hand, let us look at the question in its subjective aspect: only music can awaken the musical sense in man and the most beautiful music has *no* sense for the unmusical ear, because my object can only be the confirmation of one of my essential powers, i.e. can only be for me in so far as my essential power exists for me as a subjective attribute (this is because the sense of an object for me extends only as far as *my* sense extends, only has sense for a sense that corresponds to that object). In the same way, and for the same reasons, the *senses* of social man are *different* from those of non-social man. Only through the objectively unfolded wealth of human nature can the wealth of subjective *human* sensitivity—a musical ear, an eye for the beauty of form, in short, *senses* capable of human gratification—be either cultivated or created. For not only the five senses, but also the so-called spiritual senses, the practical senses (will, love, etc.), in a word, the *human* sense, the humanity of the

senses—all these come into being only through the existence of *their* objects, through *humanized* nature. The *cultivation* of the five senses is the work of all previous history. *Sense* which is a prisoner of crude practical need has only a *restricted* sense. For a man who is starving the human form of food does not exist, only its abstract form exists; it could just as well be present in its crudest form, and it would be hard to say how this way of eating differs from that of *animals*. The man who is burdened with worries and needs has no *sense* for the finest of plays; the dealer in minerals sees only the commercial value, and not the beauty and peculiar nature of the minerals; he lacks a mineralogical sense; thus the objectification of the human essence, in a theoretical as well as a practical respect, is necessary both in order to make man's *senses human* and to create an appropriate *human sense* for the whole of the wealth of humanity and of nature.

Just as in its initial stages society is presented with all the material for this *cultural development* through the movement of *private property* and of its wealth and poverty—both material and intellectual wealth and poverty—so the society that is *fully developed* produces man in all the richness of his being, the *rich* man who is *profoundly and abundantly endowed with all the senses*, as its constant reality. It can be seen how subjectivism and objectivism, spiritualism and materialism, activity and passivity [*Leiden*], lose their antithetical character, and hence their existence as such antitheses, only in the social condition; it can be seen how the resolution of the *theoretical* antitheses themselves is possible *only* in a *practical* way, only through the practical energy of man, and how their resolution is for that reason by no means only a problem of knowledge, but a *real* problem of life, a problem which *philosophy* was unable to solve precisely because it treated it as a *purely* theoretical problem.

It can be seen how the history of *industry* and the *objective* existence of industry as it has developed is the *open* book of the essential powers of man, man's psychology present in tangible form; up to now this history has not been grasped in its connection with the *nature* of man, but only in an external utilitarian aspect, for man, moving in the realm of estrangement, was only capable of conceiving the general existence of man—religion, or history in its abstract and universal form of politics, art, literature, etc.—as the reality of man's essential powers and as *man's species-activity*. In *everyday, material industry* (which can just as easily be considered as a part of that general development as that general development itself can be considered as a *particular* part of industry, since all human activity up to now has been labor, i.e. industry, self-estranged activity) we find ourselves confronted with the *objectified powers of the human essence*, in the form of *sensuous, alien, useful objects*, in the form of estrangement. A *psychology* for which this book, the most tangible and

accessible part of history, is closed, can never become a *real* science with a genuine content. What indeed should we think of a science which *primly* abstracts from this large area of human labor, and fails to sense its own inadequacy, even though such an extended wealth of human activity says nothing more to it perhaps than what can be said in one word—"need," "common need"?

The *natural sciences* have been prolifically active and have gathered together an ever growing mass of material. But philosophy has remained just as alien to them as they have remained alien to philosophy. Their momentary union was only a *fantastic illusion.* The will was there, but not the means. Even historiography only incidentally takes account of natural science, which it sees as contributing to enlightenment, utility, and a few great discoveries. But natural science has intervened in and transformed human life all the more *practically* through industry and has prepared the conditions for human emancipation, however much its immediate effect was to complete the process of dehumanization. *Industry* is the *real* historical relationship of nature, and hence of natural science, to man. If it is then conceived as the *exoteric* revelation of man's *essential powers,* the *human* essence of nature or the *natural* essence of man can also be understood. Hence natural science will lose its abstractly material, or rather idealist, orientation and become the basis of a *human* science, just as it has already become—though in an *estranged* form—the basis of actual human life. The idea of *one* basis for life and another for *science* is from the very outset a lie. Nature as it comes into being in human history—in the act of creation of human society—is the *true* nature of man; hence nature as it comes into being through industry, though in an *estranged* form, is true *anthropological* nature.

Sense perception (see Feuerbach) must be the basis of all science. Only when science starts out from sense perception in the dual form of *sensuous* consciousness and *sensuous* need—i.e. only when science starts out from nature—is it *real* science. The whole of history is a preparation, a development, for "*man*" to become the object of *sensuous* consciousness and for the needs of "man as man" to become [sensuous] needs. History itself is a *real* part of *natural history* and of nature's becoming man. Natural science will in time subsume the science of man just as the science of man will subsume natural science: there will be *one* science.

Man is the immediate object of natural science; for immediate *sensuous nature* for man is, immediately, human sense perception (an identical expression) in the form of the *other* man who is present in his sensuous immediacy for him. His own sense perception only exists as human sense perception for himself through the *other* man. But *nature* is the immediate object of the *science of man.* Man's first object—man—is nature, sense perception; and the par-

ticular sensuous human powers, since they can find objective realization only in *natural* objects, can find self-knowledge only in the science of nature in general. The element of thought itself, the element of the vital expression of thought—*language*—is sensuous nature. The *social* reality of nature and *human* natural science or the *natural science of man* are identical expressions.

It can be seen how the *rich man* and the wealth of *human* need take the place of the *wealth* and *poverty* of political economy. The *rich* man is simultaneously the man *in need* of a totality of vital human expression; he is the man in whom his own realization exists as inner necessity, as *need*. Given socialism, not only man's *wealth* but also his *poverty* acquire a *human* and hence a social significance. Poverty is the passive bond which makes man experience his greatest wealth—the *other* man—as need. The domination of the objective essence within me, the sensuous outburst of my essential activity, is *passion*, which here becomes the *activity* of my being.

(5) A *being* sees himself as independent only when he stands on his own feet, and he only stands on his own feet when he owes his *existence* to himself. A man who lives by the grace of another regards himself as a dependent being. But I live completely by the grace of another if I owe him not only the maintenance of my life but also its *creation*, if he is the *source* of my life. My life is necessarily grounded outside itself if it is not my own creation. The *creation* is therefore an idea which is very hard to exorcize from the popular consciousness. This consciousness is *incapable of comprehending* the self-mediated being [*Durchsichselbstsein*] of nature and of man, since such a being contradicts all the *palpable evidence* of practical life.

The creation of the *earth* received a heavy blow from the science of *geogeny*, i.e. the science which depicts the formation of the earth, its coming to be, as a process of self-generation. *Generatio dequivoca* [spontaneous generation] is the only practical refutation of the theory of creation.

Now it is easy to say to a particular individual what Aristotle said: You were begotten by your father and your mother, which means that in you the mating of two human beings, a human species-act, produced another human being. Clearly, then, man also owes his existence to man in a physical sense. Therefore you should not only keep sight of the *one* aspect, the *infinite* progression which leads you on to the question: "Who begot my father, his grandfather, etc.?" You should also keep in mind the *circular movement* sensuously perceptible in that progression whereby man reproduces himself in the act of begetting and thus always remains the subject. But you will reply: I grant you this circular movement, but you must also grant me the right to progress back to the question: Who begot the first man, and nature in general? I can only answer: Your question is itself a product of abstraction. Ask yourself how you

arrived at that question. Ask yourself whether your question does not arise from a standpoint to which I cannot reply because it is a perverse one. Ask yourself whether that progression exists as such for rational thought. If you ask about the creation of nature and of man, then you are abstracting from nature and from man. You assume them as *non-existent* and want me to prove to you that they *exist*. My answer is: Give up your abstraction and you will then give up your question. But if you want to hold on to your abstraction, then do so consistently, and if you assume the non-existence of man and nature, then assume also your own non-existence, for you are also nature and man. Do not think and do not ask me questions, for as soon as you think and ask questions, your *abstraction* from the existence of nature and man has no meaning. Or are you such an egoist that you assume everything as non-existent and still want to exist yourself?

You can reply: I do not want to assume the nothingness of nature, etc. I am only asking how it *arose*, just as I might ask the anatomist about the formation of bones, etc.

But since for socialist man the *whole of what is called world history* is nothing more than the creation of man through human labor, and the development of nature for man, he therefore has palpable and incontrovertible proof of his self-mediated *birth*, of his *process of emergence*. Since the *essentiality* [*Wesenhaftigkeit*] of man and of nature, man as the existence of nature for man and nature as the existence of man for man, has become practically and sensuously perceptible, the question of an *alien* being, a being above nature and man—a question which implies an admission of the unreality of nature and of man—has become impossible in practice. *Atheism*, which is a denial of this unreality, no longer has any meaning, for atheism is a *negation of God*, through which negation it asserts the *existence of man*. But socialism as such no longer needs such mediation. Its starting-point is the *theoretically and practically sensuous consciousness* of man and of nature as *essential beings*. It is the *positive self-consciousness* of man, no longer mediated through the abolition of religion, just as *real life* is positive reality no longer mediated through the abolition of private property, through *communism*. Communism is the act of positing as the negation of the negation, and is therefore a *real* phase, necessary for the next period of historical development, in the emancipation and recovery of mankind. *Communism* is the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism is not as such the goal of human development—the form of human society.[6]

Notes

1. "Communism" in this sense is, of course, the "crude communism" of utopian thinkers such as Fourier, Proudhon, and Babeuf, and is later contrasted with Marx's own conception of communism.

2. Having discussed the nature of "crude communism," Marx now goes on to describe his own conception of communism.

3. *K. M.*: Prostitution is only a *particular* expression of the *universal* prostitution of the *worker,* and since prostitution is a relationship which includes not only the prostituted but also the prostitutor—whose infamy is even greater—the capitalist is also included in this category.

4. *K. M.*: It is therefore just as varied as the *determinations* of the *human essence* and *activities.*

5. *K. M.*: In practice I can only relate myself to a thing in a human way if the thing is related in a human way to man.

6. The meaning of this sentence is unclear. "Communism . . . as such" is sometimes taken as referring to the "crude communism" discussed earlier. On the other hand, the sentence can be interpreted as meaning that communism is not the final stage in the development of humanity, but will in its turn be transcended by a richer and higher stage.

"MONEY" (1844)

If man's *feelings,* passions, etc., are not merely anthropological characteristics in the narrower sense, but are truly *ontological* affirmations of his essence (nature), and if they only really affirm themselves in so far as their *object* exists *sensuously* for them, then it is clear:

(1) That their mode of affirmation is by no means one and the same, but rather that the different modes of affirmation constitute the particular character of their existence, of their life. The mode in which the object exists for them is the characteristic mode of their *gratification.*
(2) Where the sensuous affirmation is a direct annulment *[Aufheben]* of the object in its independent form (eating, drinking, fashioning of objects, etc.), this is the affirmation of the object.
(3) In so far as man, and hence also his feelings, etc., are *human,* the affirmation of the object by another is also his own gratification.
(4) Only through developed industry, i.e. through the mediation of private property, does the ontological essence of human passion come into being, both in its totality and in its humanity; the science of man is therefore itself a product of the self-formation of man through practical activity.

(5) The meaning of private property, freed from its estrangement, is the *existence* of *essential objects* for man, both as objects of enjoyment and of activity.

Money, inasmuch as it possesses the *property* of being able to buy everything and appropriate all objects, is the *object* most worth possessing. The universality of this *property* is the basis of money's omnipotence; hence it is regarded as an omnipotent being . . . Money is the *pimp* between need and object, between life and man's means of life. But *that* which mediates *my* life also *mediates* the existence of other men for me. It is for me the *other* person.

Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust:*

> What, man! confound it, hands and feet
> And head and backside, all are yours!
> And what we take while life is sweet,
> Is that to be declared not ours?
> Six stallions, say, I can afford,
> Is not their strength my property?
> I tear along, a sporting lord,
> As if their legs belonged to me.

Shakespeare in *Timon of Athens*:

> Gold? Yellow, glittering, precious gold? No, gods,
> I am no idle votarist: roots, you clear heavens!
> Thus much of this will make black, white; foul, fair;
> Wrong, right; base, noble; old, young; coward, valiant.
> . . . Why, this
> Will lug your priests and servants from your sides;
> Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads:
> This yellow slave
> Will knit and break religions; bless th'accurst;
> Make the hoar leprosy adored; place thieves,
> And give them title, knee, and approbation,
> With senators on the bench: this is it
> That makes the wappen'd widow wed again;
> She whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores
> Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
> To th' April day again. Come, damned earth,
> Thou common whore of mankind, that putt'st odds
> Among the rout of nations, I will make thee
> Do thy right nature.

And later on:

> O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce
> 'Twixt natural son and sire! Thou bright defiler

Of Hymen's purest bed! Thou valiant Mars!
Thou ever young, fresh, loved and delicate wooer,
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow
That lies on Dian's lap! Thou *visible god,*
That solder'st close *impossibilities,*
And mak'st them kiss! That speak'st with every tongue,
To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts!
Think, thy slave man rebels; and by thy virtue
Set them into confounding odds, that beasts
May have the world in empire!

Shakespeare paints a brilliant picture of the nature of *money.* To understand him, let us begin by expounding the passage from Goethe.

That which exists for me through the medium of *money,* that which I can pay for, i.e. which money can buy, that *am I,* the possessor of the money. The stronger the power of my money, the stronger am I. The properties of money are my, the possessor's, properties and essential powers. Therefore what I *am* and what I *can do* is by no means determined by my individuality. I *am* ugly, but I can buy the *most beautiful* woman. Which means to say that I am not *ugly,* for the effect of *ugliness,* its repelling power, is destroyed by money. As an individual, I am *lame,* but money procures me twenty-four legs. Consequently, I am not lame. I am a wicked, dishonest, unscrupulous and stupid individual, but money is respected, and so also is its owner. Money is the highest good, and consequently its owner is also good. Moreover, money spares me the trouble of being dishonest, and I am therefore presumed to be honest. I am *mindless,* but if money is the *true mind* of all things, how can its owner be mindless? What is more, he can buy clever people for himself, and is not he who has power over clever people cleverer than them? Through money I can have anything the human heart desires. Do I not therefore possess all human abilities? Does not money therefore transform all my incapacities into their opposite?

If *money* is the bond which ties me to *human* life and society to me, which links me to nature and to man, is money not the bond of all *bonds*? Can it not bind and loose all bonds? Is it therefore not the universal *means of separation*? It is the true *agent of separation* and the true *cementing agent,* it is the *chemical* power of society.

Shakespeare brings out two properties of money in particular:

(1) It is the visible divinity, the transformation of all human and natural qualities into their opposites, the universal confusion and inversion of things; it brings together impossibilities.
(2) It is the universal whore, the universal pimp of men and peoples.

The inversion and confusion of all human and natural qualities, the bringing together of impossibilities, the *divine* power of money lies in its *nature* as the estranged and alienating *species-essence* of man which alienates itself by selling itself. It is the alienated *capacity* of *mankind.*

What I as a man cannot do, i.e. what all my individual powers cannot do, I can do with the help of *money.* Money therefore transforms each of these essential powers into something which it is not, into its *opposite.*

If I desire a meal or want to take the mail coach because I am not strong enough to make the journey on foot, money can procure me both the meal and the mail coach, i.e. it transfers my wishes from the realm of imagination, it translates them from their existence as thought, imagination, and desires into their *sensuous, real* existence, from imagination into life, and from imagined being into real being. In this mediating role money is the *truly creative* power.

Demand also exists for those who have no money, but their demand is simply a figment of the imagination. For me or for any other third party it has no effect, no existence. For me it therefore remains *unreal* and *without an object.* The difference between effective demand based on money and ineffective demand based on my need, my passion, my desire, etc., is the difference between *being* and *thinking,* between a representation which merely *exists* within me and one which exists outside me as a *real object.*

If I have no money for travel, I have no *need,* i.e. no real and self-realizing need, to travel. If I have a vocation to study, but no money for it, I have *no* vocation to study, i.e. no *real, true* vocation. But if I really do not have any vocation to study, but have the will *and* the money, then I have an *effective* vocation to do so. *Money,* which is the external, universal *means* and *power*—derived not from man as man and not from human society as society—to turn *imagination into reality* and *reality into mere imagination,* similarly turns *real human and natural powers* into purely abstract representations, and therefore *imperfections* and tormenting phantoms, just as it turns *real imperfections and phantoms*—truly impotent powers which exist only in the individual's fantasy—into *real essential powers* and *abilities.* Thus characterized, money is the universal inversion of *individualities,* which it turns into their opposites and to whose qualities it attaches contradictory qualities.

Money therefore appears as an *inverting* power in relation to the individual and to those social and other bonds which claim to be *essences* in themselves. It transforms loyalty into treason, love into hate, hate into love, virtue into vice, vice into virtue, servant into master, master into servant, nonsense into reason and reason into nonsense.

Since money, as the existing and active concept of value, confounds and exchanges everything, it is the universal *confusion* and *exchange* of all things,

an inverted world, the confusion and exchange of all natural and human qualities.

He who can buy courage is brave, even if he is a coward. Money is not exchanged for a particular quality, a particular thing, or for any particular one of the essential powers of man, but for the whole objective world of man and of nature. Seen from the standpoint of the person who possesses it, money exchanges every quality for every other quality and object, even if it is contradictory; it is the power which brings together impossibilities and forces contradictions to embrace.

If we assume *man* to be *man,* and his relation to the world to be a human one, then love can be exchanged only for love, trust for trust, and so on. If you wish to enjoy art you must be an artistically educated person; if you wish to exercise influence on other men you must be the sort of person who has a truly stimulating and encouraging effect on others. Each one of your relations to man—and to nature—must be a *particular expression,* corresponding to the object of your will, of your *real individual* life. If you love unrequitedly, i.e. if your love as love does not call forth love in return, if through the *vital expression* of yourself as a loving person you fail to become a *loved person,* then your love is impotent, it is a misfortune.

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO (CHAPTER 1) (1848)

Published in 1848, this brief writing (we include only chapter one) displays an extraordinary appreciation for the capitalist revolution as a true and fundamental revolution, and of the capitalist class as revolutionaries. Here we find Marx developing all three of his most fundamental categories of interpretation: (1) the means of production, *(2) the* social relations of production *and (3) the* social powers of production *(which Marx acknowledges have been explosively expanded by capitalism). We find presented briefly and somewhat obscurely what Marx considered the fatal self-contradiction of capitalism. Once capitalism is fully global, capitalists competing with other capitalists will be forced to pursue endlessly the cheapest possible labor. In that pursuit they will, time and again, leave behind the once better paid workers that used to be able to buy as consumers what capitalists need to sell. What capitalism finally produces, then, is its own grave—the crisis of overproduction—and its own grave diggers, workers as a self-conscious class united in political struggle.*

A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of Communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter: Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where the Opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of Communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

Two things result from this fact:

I. Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power.

II. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the specter of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

To this end, Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London, and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish, and Danish languages.

Bourgeois and Proletarians[1]

The history of all hitherto existing society[2] is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master[3] and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society, has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: It has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is

more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—bourgeoisie and proletariat.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

The feudal system of industry, in which industrial production was monopolized by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets. The manufacturing system took its place. The guild-masters were pushed aside by the manufacturing middle class; division of labor between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labor in each single workshop.

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionized industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, modern industry, the place of the industrial middle class, by industrial millionaires—the leaders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, it became an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune;[4] here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany), there taxable "third estate" of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacture proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the

great monarchies in general—the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of modern industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative state, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie has played a most revolutionary role in history.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors," and has left no other bond between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom—Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-laborers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigor in the Middle Ages, which reactionaries so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former migrations of nations and crusades.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind.

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionaries, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures there arises a world literature.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all nations, even the most barbarian, into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In a word, it creates a world after its own image.

The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.

More and more the bourgeoisie keeps doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralized means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political

centralization. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class interest, one frontier, and one customs tariff.

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?

We see then that the means of production and of exchange, which served as the foundation for the growth of the bourgeoisie, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organization of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in a word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder.

Into their place stepped free competition, accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted to it, and by the economic and political sway of the bourgeois class.

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed. And why? Because

there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and no sooner do they overcome these fetters than they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand, by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore also of labor, is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labor increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time, or by increased speed of the machinery, etc.

Modern industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of laborers, crowded

into the factory, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois state; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the over-looker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is.

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labor, in other words, the more modern industry develops, the more is the labor of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labor, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex.

No sooner has the laborer received his wages in cash, for the moment escaping exploitation by the manufacturer, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

The lower strata of the middle class—the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants—all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which modern industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual laborers, then by the work people of a factory, then by the operatives of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labor, they smash machinery to pieces, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage the laborers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover still able to do so for a time. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concen-

trated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon the workers begin to form combinations (trade unions) against the bourgeoisie; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is furthered by the improved means of communication which are created by modern industry, and which place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletarians, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus the ten-hour bill in England was carried.

Altogether, collisions between the classes of the old society further the course of development of the proletariat in many ways. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie

itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests; they desert their own standpoint to adopt that of the proletariat.

The "dangerous class," the social scum (*Lumpenproletariat*), that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

The social conditions of the old society no longer exist for the proletariat. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with bourgeois family relations; modern industrial labor, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern laborer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential condition for the existence and sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor.

Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

Notes

1. By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labor; by proletariat, the class of modern wage-laborers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labor power in order to live.

2. That is, all *written* history. In 1837, the pre-history of society, the social organization existing previous to recorded history, was all but unknown. Since then Haxthausen [August von, 1792–1866] discovered common ownership of land in Russia, Maurer [Georg Ludwig von] proved it to be the social foundation from which all Teutonic races started in history, and, by and by, village communities were found to be, or to have been, the primitive form of society everywhere from India to Ireland. The inner organization of this primitive communistic society was laid bare, in its typical form, by Morgan's [Lewis H., 1818–1881] crowning discovery of the true nature of the *gens* and its relation to the *tribe*. With the dissolution of these primeval communities, society begins to be differentiated into separate and finally antagonistic classes. I have attempted to retrace this process of dissolution in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*.

3. Guild-master, that is a full member of a guild, a master within, not a head of a guild.

4. "Commune" was the name taken in France by the nascent towns even before they had conquered from their feudal lords and masters local self-government and political rights as the "Third Estate." Generally speaking, for the economic development of the bourgeoisie, England is here taken as the typical country, for its political development, France.

"MONEY AND ALIENATED MAN" (1844)

In this article Marx examines how, under capitalism, money has become the new master tool, *the tool that determines the organization and use of all other tools. As such, money (*capital*) becomes the Director General of our human species life. It mediates our life not only with all other humans but also with nature. In so doing, money becomes a fetish. We worship it as the most powerful power in our life.*

In comparing money with precious metals, as well as in the discussion of the costs of production as the only factor in determining value, Mill makes the mistake—generally like Ricardo's school—of giving the *abstract law* without the variation and continuous suspension by which it comes into being. If it is an *independent* law, for example, that the costs of production ultimately—or rather with the periodic and accidental coincidence of supply and demand—determine price (value), it is equally an *independent* law that this relationship does not hold and that value and production costs have no necessary relationship. Indeed, supply and demand coincide only momentarily because of previous fluctuations of supply and demand, because of the discrepancy of costs and exchange value, just as this fluctuation and discrepancy in turn succeed the momentary coincidence of supply and demand. This *actual* process, in which this law is only an abstract, accidental, and one-sided factor, becomes something accidental, something unessential with the modern economists. Why? Since they reduce the economic order to precise and exact formulas, the basic formula, abstractly expressed, would have to be: In the economic order lawfulness is determined by its opposite, lawlessness. The real law of the economic order is *contingency* from which we scientists arbitrarily stabilize some aspects in the form of laws.

In designating *money* as the *medium* of exchange, Mill puts the matter very well and succinctly in a single concept. The essence of money is not primarily that it externalizes property, but that the *mediating activity* or process—the *human* and social act in which man's products reciprocally complement one another—becomes *alienated* and takes on the quality of a *material thing*, money, external to man. By externalizing this mediating activity, man is active only as he is lost and dehumanized. The very *relationship* of things and the human dealings with them become an operation beyond and above man. Through this *alien mediation* man regards his will, his activity, and his relationships to others as a power independent of himself and of them—instead of man himself being the mediator for man. His slavery thus reaches a climax. It is clear that this *mediator* becomes an *actual god*, for the mediator is the *actual power* over that which he mediates to me. His worship becomes an end in itself. Apart from this mediation, objects lose their value. They have value only insofar as they *represent* it while originally it appeared that the mediation would have value only insofar as *it* represents *objects*. This inversion of the original relationship is necessary. The *mediation*, therefore, is the lost, alienated *essence* of private property, exteriorated and *externalized* private property, just as it is the *externalized exchange* of human production with human production, the *externalized* species—activity of man. All qualities involved in this activity are transmitted

to the mediator. Man as separated from this mediator thus becomes so much the poorer as the mediator becomes *richer.*

Christ originally *represents:* (1) man before God; (2) God for man; (3) man for man.

Likewise, *money* originally represents by its very concept: (1) private property for private property; (2) society for private property; (3) private property for society.

But Christ is God *externalized,* externalized *man.* God has value only insofar as he represents Christ; man has value only insofar as he represents Christ. It is the same with money.

Why must private property end up in *money?* Because man as a social being must resort to *exchange* and because exchange—under the presupposition of private property—must end up in value. The mediating process of man making exchanges is no social, no *human process,* no human relationship; rather, it is the *abstract relationship* of private property to private property, and this *abstract* relationship is the *value* whose actual existence as value is primarily *money.* Because men making exchanges do not relate to one another as men, *things* lose the significance of being human and personal property. The social relationship of private property to private property is a relationship in which private property has alienated itself. The reflexive existence of this relationship, money, is thus the externalization of private property, an abstraction from its *specific* and personal nature.

Despite all its cleverness, the modern economic order in opposition to the monetary system cannot achieve a decisive victory. The crude economic superstitions of people and their governments hold on to the *perceptible, palpable,* and *observable* moneybag and believe in the absolute value of precious metals and their possession as the only real form of wealth. The enlightened and knowledgeable economist comes along and proves to them that money is a commodity like any other and that its value, like that of any other commodity, depends on the relationship of the costs of production to demand (competition) and supply, and to the quantity or competition of other commodities. The correct reply to this economist is that the *actual* value of things, after all, is their *exchange value,* and the exchange value resides in money, just as money exists in precious metals. Money, therefore, is the *true* value of things and hence the most desirable thing. The economist's doctrines yield the same wisdom, except that he can abstractly recognize the existence of money in all forms of commodities and not believe in the exchange value of its official metallic existence. The metallic existence of money is only the official sensuous expression of the very soul of money existing in all branches of production and in all operations of civil society.

The modern economists, in opposition to the monetary system, have grasped *money* in its abstraction and generality and are enlightened about the *sensuous* superstition which believes that money exists only in precious metals. They substitute refined superstition for this crude one. But since both have a single root, the enlightened form of the superstition does not entirely replace the crude sensuous form because it does not deal with its essence but only with the particular form of its essence.—The *personal* existence of money as money—and not only as the inner, implicitly existing, and hidden relationship of commodities to one another in respect to their conversion and status—this existence more corresponds to the essence of money, the more abstract it is and the less *natural* relationship it has to other commodities. The more it appears as a product and yet again as something not produced by man, the less is its element of existence something *produced by nature.* The more it is produced by man or produced in economics, the greater is the *inverted* relationship of its *value as money* to the exchange value or to the monetary value of the material in which it exists. Hence *paper money* and *paper substitutes for money* such as bills of exchange, checks, promissory notes, etc., constitute the more *complete* existence of *money as money* and a necessary phase in the progressive development in the monetary system. In the *credit system,* fully expressed in *banking,* it appears as if the power of an alien, material force is broken, the relationships of self-alienation overcome, and man again is humanly related to man. The *followers of Saint-Simon,* misled by this *appearance,* consider the development of money, bills of exchange, paper money, paper substitutes for money, *credit,* and *banking* as a gradual transcendence of the separation of man from things, capital from labor, private property from money, and of money from man—a gradual transcendence of the separation of man from man. Hence the organized *bank system* is their ideal. But this transcendence of alienation, this *return* of man to himself and thus to other men is only *apparent.* Its self-alienation, its dehumanization is all the more *odious* and *extreme,* insofar as its element is no longer the commodity, metal, or paper, but the *moral* and *social* existence, the very *inwardness* of the human heart; insofar as it is the highest *distrust* of man for man and complete alienation, under the appearance of trust of man for man.

What is the nature of *credit?* We are here completely disregarding the *content* of credit which is again money. We thus disregard the *content* of this trust, wherein a man *recognizes* another by lending him values—let us assume that he does not take interest and is no profiteer—and by trusting that his fellow man is a "good" man and not a rascal. By a "good" man the trusting man here understands, like Shylock, the man who can pay. Credit is possible under two relationships and under two distinct conditions. Take the case where a wealthy

man gives credit to a poor man whom he considers diligent and reliable. This kind of credit belongs in the romantic and sentimental part of economics, belongs to its departures, excesses, *exceptions,* not to its *rule.* Even if this exception and this romantic possibility are assumed, the life, talent, and activity of the poor man *guarantee* for the rich man the repayment for the money loaned. All social virtues of the poor man, then, the substance of his living and his very existence, represent for the rich man the reimbursement of his capital with the usual interest. The death of the poor man is the worst possibility for the creditor. It is the death of his capital and the interest as well. Consider the ignominy in the *evaluation* of a man in terms of *money* as it takes place in the credit system. It is understood that in addition to *moral* guarantees the creditor also has the guarantee of *judicial* force and more or less *real* guarantees for his man. If the debtor is himself affluent, *credit* becomes merely a facilitating *medium* of exchange, and *money* itself acquires an *ideal* form. *Credit* is the *economic* judgment of man's morality. In credit, *man* himself instead of metal and paper has become the *medium* of exchange, but not as man, but rather as the *existence of capital* and interest. The medium of exchange is thus returned from its material form to man, but only because man has been externalized and has himself become a material form. Within the credit relationship, money is not transcended in man, but man is transformed into *money,* and money is *incorporated* in him. *Human individuality* and human *morality* have become an article of trade and the *material* in which money exists. Instead of money and paper, my very personal existence, my flesh and blood, my social virtue and reputation is the matter and the substance of the *monetary spirit.* Credit no longer reduces monetary value to money, but to human flesh and the human heart. All the progress and inconsequence of a false system thus constitute the extreme regression and consequence of ignominy.

The nature of the credit system as alienated from man is confirmed in the following manner under the appearance of the economic recognition of man: (1) The contrast between the capitalist and the laborer—between the big and the small capitalist—becomes even greater as credit is given only to the one who already has and is a new chance for accumulation for the wealthy, or as the poor person sees his *entire* existence confirmed or denied, and completely dependent upon the accidental caprice and judgment of the wealthy man. (2) Mutual dissimulation, hypocrisy, and sanctimoniousness are carried to the point that a moral judgment is added to the simple statement that a man without credit is poor, a judgment that he is untrustworthy and unworthy of recognition, a social pariah and bad man. On a top of suffering from his destitution the poor man suffers from having to make a debasing *plea* to the rich for credit. (3) With this completely *ideal* existence of money, man must *counter-*

feit his own person and must obtain credit by sneaking and lying. The credit relationship—for the creditor as well as for the debtor—becomes an object of trade, an object of mutual betrayal and misuse. Here *mistrust* is brilliantly apparent as the basis of economic trust; in the distrustful weighing as to whether credit should or should not be given; in the spying into the secrets of the private life of the one seeking credit; in the revealing of a rival's temporary misfortunes in order to wreck him by shaking his credit, etc.; the entire system of bankruptcy, pseudo-enterprises, etc. . . . In the *credit system on the state level* the state occupies completely the same position as shown above for man . . . The game with governmental bonds shows how far the state has become the plaything of men of commerce.

(4) The *credit system* is perfected in *banking*. The creation of the banker's position, state regulation of banking, concentration of fortunes in these hands—this economic *areopagus* of the nation—is the lauded perfection of the monetary system. As the *moral recognition of a man* and the *confidence in the state* has the form of *credit* in the credit system, the secret involved in the deception of that moral recognition, the *amoral* ignominy of that morality as well as the sanctimoniousness and egoism in the confidence in the state become apparent—and all this reveals itself for what it actually is.

The *exchange* of human activity within production itself as well as the exchange of *human products* with one another is equivalent to the *generic activity* and generic spirit whose actual, conscious, and authentic existence is *social* activity and *social* satisfaction. As *human* nature is the *true common life* [*Gemeinwesen*] of man, men through the activation of their *nature create* and produce a human *common life,* a social essence which is no abstractly universal power opposed to the single individual, but is the essence or nature of every single individual, his own activity, his own life, his own spirit, his own wealth. *Authentic common life* arises not through reflection; rather it comes about from the *need* and *egoism* of individuals, that is, immediately from the activation of their very existence. It is not up to man whether this common life exists or not. However, so long as man does not recognize himself as man and does not organize the world humanly, this *common life* appears in the form of *alienation,* because its *subject,* man, is a being alienated from itself. Men as actual, living, particular individuals, not in an abstraction, *constitute* this common life. It is, therefore, *what* men are. To say that *man* alienates himself is the same as saying that the *society* of this alienated man is the caricature of his *actual common life,* of his true generic life. His activity, therefore, appears as torment, his own creation as a force alien to him, his wealth as poverty, the *essential bond* connecting him with other men as something unessential so that the separation from other men appears as his true existence. His life appears as the sacrifice

of his life, the realization of his nature as the diminution of his life, his production as the production of his destruction, his power over the object as the power of the object over him; the master of his creation appears as its slave.

Political economy understands the *common life of man,* the self-activating *human* essence and mutual redintegration toward generic and truly human life, in the form of *exchange* and *commerce. Society,* says Destutt de Tracy, is a *series of multilateral exchanges.* It is constituted by this movement of multilateral integration. *Society,* says Adam Smith, is a *commercial enterprise.* Each of its members is a *merchant.* It is evident that political economy *establishes* an *alienated* form of social intercourse as the *essential, original,* and definitive human form.

Economics—like the actual process itself—proceeds from the *relationship of man to man* and from the relationship of one *property owner to another.* Let us presuppose man as *property owner,* that is, as exclusive possessor who maintains his personality and distinguishes himself from other men and relates himself to them through this exclusive possession. Private property is his personal existence, his *distinguishing* and hence essential existence. The *loss* or *relinquishing* of private property, then, is an *externalization of man* as well as of *private property.* We are concerned here only with the latter. When I yield my private property to another person, it ceases being mine. It becomes something independent of me and *outside* my sphere, something *external* to me. I *externalize* my private property. So far as I am concerned, it is *externalized* private property. I see it only as something generally *externalized;* I only transcend my *personal* relationship to it; and I return it to the *elemental* forces of nature when I externalize it only in relation to myself. It only becomes externalized *private property* as it ceases being *my* private property without ceasing to be *private property* in general, that is, when it acquires the same relationship to *another* man *outside* of me, as it had to me—in a word, when it becomes the *private property* of *another* man. Apart from the situation of *force,* what causes me to externalize *my* private property to another person? Economics answers correctly: *need* and *want.* The other person is also a property owner, but of *another* object which I lack and which I neither can nor want to be without, an object which to me seems to be something *needed* for the redintegration of my existence and the realization of my nature.

The bond relating the two property owners to each other is the *specific nature of the object.* The fact that either property owner desires and wants objects makes him aware that he has another *essential* relationship to objects outside of property and that he is not the particular being he takes himself to be but rather a *total* being whose wants have a relationship of *inner* property to the products of the labor of the other person. For the need of an object is the most

evident and irrefutable proof that the object belongs to *my* nature and that the existence of the object for me and its *property* are the property appropriate to my essence. Both owners are thus impelled to relinquish their property, but in such a way that at the same time they reaffirm that property; or they are impelled to relinquish that property within the relationship of private property. Each thus externalizes a part of his property in the other person.

The *social* relationship of both owners is thus the *mutuality of externalization*, the relationship of externalization on both sides—or *externalization* as the relationship of both owners—while in simple private property *externalization* takes place only one-sidedly, in relationship to itself.

Exchange or *barter,* therefore, is the social, generic act, the common essence, the social intercourse and integration of man within *private property,* and the external, the *externalized* generic act. For that very reason it appears as *barter.* And hence it is likewise the opposite of the *social* relationship.

Through the mutual externalization or alienation of private property, *private property* itself has been determined as *externalized* private property. First of all it has ceased being the product of labor and being the exclusive, distinctive personality of its owner because the owner has externalized it; it has been removed from the owner whose product it was and has acquired a personal significance for the person who did *not* produce it. It has lost its personal significance for the owner. In the second place it has been related to and equated with another private property. A private property of a *different* nature has taken its place, just as it itself takes the position of a private property of a *different* nature. On both sides, then, private property appears as a representative of private property of a different nature, as the *equivalence* of another natural product. Both sides are so related that each represents the existence of the *other* and they mutually serve as *substitutes* for themselves and the other. The existence of private property as such has thus become a *substitute,* an *equivalent.* Instead of its immediate self-unity it exists only in relationship to *something else.* As an *equivalent* its existence is no longer something peculiarly appropriate to it. It has become *value* and immediately *exchange value.* Its existence as *value* is a determination of *itself,* different from its immediate existence, outside of its specific nature, and *externalized*—only a *relative* existence.

It will be shown elsewhere how this *value* is more precisely determined and how it becomes *price.*

The relationship of exchange being presupposed, *labor immediately* becomes *wage-labor.* This relationship of alienated labor reaches its apex only by the fact (1) that on the one side *wage-labor,* the product of the laborer, stands in no *immediate* relationship to his need and to his *status* but is rather determined in both directions through social combinations alien to the laborer; (2)

that the *buyer* of the product is not himself productive but exchanges what has been produced by others. In the crude form of *externalized* private property, *barter,* each of the two private owners produces what his need, his inclination, and the existing raw material induces him to produce. They exchange only the surplus of their production. To be sure, labor was for each one the immediate *source of his subsistence;* at the same time, however, it was also the confirmation of his *individual existence.* Through exchange, his *labor* has partly become his *source of income.* The purpose and existence of labor have changed. The product is created as *value, exchange value,* and an *equivalent* and no longer because of its immediate personal relationship to the producer. The more varied production becomes—in other words, the more varied the needs become on the one hand and the more one-sided the producer's output becomes on the other—the more does his labor fall into the category of *wage-labor,* until it is eventually nothing but wage-labor and until it becomes entirely *incidental* and *unessential* whether the producer immediately enjoys and needs his product and whether the *activity,* the action of labor itself, is his self-satisfaction and the realization of his natural dispositions and spiritual aims.

The following elements are contained in *wage-labor*: (1) the chance relationship and alienation of labor from the laboring subject; (2) the chance relationship and alienation of labor from its object; (3) the determination of the laborer through social needs which are an alien compulsion to him, a compulsion to which he submits out of egoistic need and distress—these social needs are merely a source of providing the necessities of life for him, just as he is merely a slave for them; (4) the maintenance of his individual existence appears to the worker as the *goal* of his activity and his real action is only a means; he lives to acquire the means of *living.*

The greater and the more articulated the social power is within the relationship of private property, the more *egoistic* and asocial man becomes, the more he becomes alienated from his own nature.

Just as the mutual exchange of products of *human activity* appears as *trading* and *bargaining,* so does the mutual redintegration and exchange of the activity itself appear as the *division of labor* making man as far as possible an abstract being, an automaton, and transforming him into a spiritual and physical monster.

Precisely the unity of human labor is regarded as being its *division* because its social nature comes into being only as its opposite, in the form of alienation. The *division of labor* increases with civilization.

Within the presupposition of the division of labor, the product and material of private property gradually acquire for the individual the significance of

an *equivalent*. He no longer exchanges his *surplus*, and he can become *indifferent* to the object of his production. He no longer immediately exchanges his product for the product he *needs*. The equivalent becomes an equivalent in *money* which is the immediate result of wage-labor and the *medium* of exchange. (See above.)

The complete domination of the alienated object *over* man is evident in *money* and the complete disregard of the nature of the material, the specific nature of private property as well as the personality of the proprietor.

What formerly was the domination of one person over another has now become the general domination of the *thing* over the *person*, the domination of the product over the producer. Just as the determination of the *externalization* of private property lay in the *equivalent* and in value, so is *money* the sensuous, self-objectified existence of this *externalization*.

It is clear that economics can grasp this entire development only as a factum and as the offspring of chance need.

The separation of labor from itself = separation of laborer from capitalist = separation of labor from capital whose original form can be divided into *real property* and *chattel property* . . . The original determination of private property is monopoly; as soon as it acquires a political constitution, it is that of monopoly. Monopoly perfected is competition.—The economist distinguishes *production* and *consumption*, and as media of both he refers to *exchange* or *distribution*. The separation of production from consumption, and of activity from mind in various individuals and within the same individual is the *separation of labor* from its *object* and from itself as one mind. *Distribution* is the self-active power of private property.—The mutual separation of labor, capital, and real property as well as the separation of labor from labor, of capital from capital, of real property from real property, and finally the separation of labor from wages, of capital from profit, of profit from interest, and of real property from rent makes self-alienation appear in the form of self-alienation as well as in the form of mutual alienation.

"CAPITAL," BOOK ONE (EXTRACT) (1867)

These brief extracts from Marx's masterpiece show that he continued throughout his mature years to look upon religion as a mere reflex *of the real world, an expression of human alienation reflecting an objectively alienated world, a world that was accepted and baptized by the church.*

. . . The religious world is but the reflex of the real world. And for a society based upon the production of commodities, in which the producers in general enter into social relations with one another by treating their products as commodities and values, whereby they reduce their individual private labor to the standard of homogeneous human labor—for such a society, Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, etc., is the most fitting form of religion. In the ancient Asiatic and other ancient modes of production, we find that the conversion of products into commodities, and therefore the conversion of men into producers of commodities, holds a subordinate place, which, however, increases in importance as the primitive communities approach nearer and nearer to their dissolution. Trading nations, properly so called, exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in the Intermundia, or like Jews in the pores of Polish society. Those ancient social organisms of production are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent. But they are founded either on the immature development of man individually, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellowmen in a primitive tribal community, or upon direct relations of subjection. They can arise and exist only when the development of the productive power of labor has not risen beyond a low stage, and when, therefore, the social relations within the sphere of material life, between man and man, and between man and nature, are correspondingly narrow. This narrowness is reflected in the ancient worship of nature, and in the other elements of the popular religions. The religious reflex of the real world can, in any case, only then finally vanish, when the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellowmen and to nature.

The life-process of society, which is based on the process of material production, does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan. This, however, demands for society a certain material groundwork or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development.

Political Economy has indeed analyzed, however incompletely, value and its magnitude, and has discovered what lies beneath these forms. But it has never once asked the question why labor is represented by the value of its product and labor-time by the magnitude of that value. These formulae, which bear stamped upon them in unmistakable letters, that they belong to a state of society, in which the process of production has the mastery over man, instead

of being controlled by him, such formulae appear to the bourgeois intellect to be as much a self-evident necessity imposed by nature as productive labor itself. Hence, forms of social production that preceded the bourgeois form are treated by the bourgeoisie in much the same way as the Fathers of the Church treated pre-Christian religions. . . .

. . . A critical history of technology would show how little any of the inventions of the 18th century are the work of a single individual. Hitherto there is no such book. Darwin has interested us in the history of Nature's Technology, i.e., in the formation of the organs of plants and animals, which organs serve as instruments of production for sustaining life. Does not the history of the productive organs of man, of organs that are the material basis of all social organization, deserve equal attention? And would not such a history be easier to compile, since, as Vico says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the former, but not the latter? Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with nature, the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, and of the mental conceptions that flow from them. Every history of religion even, that fails to take account of this material basis, is uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion, than, conversely, it is to develop from the actual relations of life the corresponding celestialized forms of those relations. The latter method is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific, one. The weak points in the abstract materialism of natural science, a materialism that excludes history and its process, are at once evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions of its spokesmen, whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own speciality.

PART IV

The Criticism of Religion

Many social scientists see in religion an indispensable instrument by which we humans make our sufferings more sufferable. Religion not only tells us of a different place where things will be better—heaven, paradise, nirvana—it supplies us with a set of ritual practices by which to express, both individually and collectively, our sorrows. And in expressing our sorrow—in saying our prayers, in doing our ritual washing, in imposing our acts of ascetic self-denial—we give order and coherence to chaotic emotions that result from suffering and would otherwise overwhelm us. For many social scientists, religion is what helps us manage the evils that assault our lives and, individually and as a group, help us get on with our lives.

Karl Marx sees in religion a more active moral agency. *Religion is for him less a device for pacifying suffering than it is a* protest against *that suffering. "Religion," Marx says, "is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world."*[1] *Those who suffer seek not only solace but change—an end to their suffering, a way out! And Marx is quite ready to give religion a place in all of that. "Religious suffering," he says, "is at one and the same time the* expression *of real suffering and a* protest *against real suffering."*[2] *Why then does Marx finally turn away from religion, proclaiming it a useless tool? Because "the abolition of religion as the* illusory *happiness of the people is the demand for their* real *happiness."*[3]

Initially, Marx gives religion a far more active, protest role, but then he takes it away. For Marx, religion must be seen for what it is—"an inverted consciousness."[4] *Religion sees the real world, feels the real world, sorrows over the real world, but does all this* upside down. *Religion "descends from heaven to earth."*[5] *And that disempowers protest, because "the more of himself man gives to God the less he has left in himself."*[6] *For Marx, the task is to keep consciousness tightly and critically focused* upon this world, *and then change it. "The philosophers," he complains, "have only* interpreted *the world in various ways; the point is to* change *it."*[7]

What Marx criticizes is the kind of philosophy and the kind of theology he saw being practiced everywhere by academic elites. In the face of suffering what these comfortable intellectuals do is transform concrete injustices, concrete evils, into a profound understanding of Evil (with a capital "E"). The sufferings we experience in everyday life, especially if we lack power and protection, are translated into "the Problem of Evil," something that requires deep reflection and yields a self chastened by tragedy, and at the same moment elevated into an aristocracy of soul. Turning his back on such elitist self-indulgence, Marx insists:

> To arrive at man in the flesh, one does not set out from what men say, imagine, or conceive, nor from man as he is described, thought about, imagined, or conceived. Rather one sets out from real, active men and their actual life-process. . . . [Then] morality, religion, metaphysics, and all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness no longer seem to be independent. Rather, men who develop their material production and their material relationships alter their thinking and the products of their thinking along with their real existence. Consciousness does not determine life, but life determines consciousness.[8]

Still, if consciousness was wholly determined by life circumstances, then the suffering of the oppressed would be determined by that negative experience, *and protest would disappear into confession and self-blame. Of course that can happen, and has happened! But time and again the poor and the oppressed have used religion not only to survive but to resist, and eventually to rebel. Religion in the hands of those who suffer the injustices of society has been and is being used to challenge and to change the world. I will not repeat here what I pointed to in the introduction concerning the U.S. civil rights movement of the 1960s. Much of history—yes, even that memory of the past written by those who dominated their respective times—is full of subversive memories that became movements and ushered in a different future.*

Take patriarchal religion as an example. Women have been marginalized almost everywhere in world religions. They have not simply been excluded from institutions of religious hierarchy, but their voices have been taken away from them by sacred

texts, where women become not the speaking "I" or the spoken to "You" but the absent "them" of an intra-male discourse. Yet, in face of this religiously sanctioned oppression women have used religion both to express their suffering and to change the concrete circumstances of that suffering. Both in Buddhism and in Christianity, for example, women fought for and won the right to become fully ordained nuns, living under their own rule. In cultures in which women faced adult lives of marriages arranged by fathers for purposes of acquiring land or cementing alliances--and this has been the way of marriage in almost all past cultures—the opportunity to choose a celibate religious life evidenced strong resistance and effectively changed life options for women.

The central critique of Marx against religion is a critique of how elites have used and still use their religion—to give themselves, for example, a sense of legitimacy for their privilege or "meaning" in the face of personal tragedy. What I think Marx missed is that religious symbols (ideas) and ritual practices can have not only different but contradictory meanings for oppressors and the oppressed. In slave songs about what will happen in heaven, for example, slave masters heard slaves surrendering to their conditions here on earth. It gave them a wholly misplaced sense of security, which became all too evident when heaven descended suddenly to earth in the thunder of slave revolts.

Toward the end of his life, Marx, along with Friedrich Engels, came back to the issue of the apocalyptic hope of a radical transformation. In that religious cry of protest Marx and Engels heard the voice of the sufferers of social injustice probing the future for an exodus, a different way forward. Nevertheless, to this more positive assessment of religion Marx might well respond: "Yes, but what is it that religion has mostly done, and mostly still does?"

The essays that comprise this section of the book bring us full circle, back to the issues of consciousness and the material world with which we started. Once again, Marx is in dialogue with Hegel and Feuerbach. Once again, he probes the role of ideas, whether active or passive, whether merely a reflection of the already of the given world and its institutions and structures or, at least occasionally, naming a "not yet" hidden in that already. Marx is clear on the position he takes:

> Man can be distinguished from the animal by consciousness, religion, or anything else you please. He begins to distinguish himself from the animal the moment he begins *to produce* his means of subsistence. . . . [The] mode of production must not be viewed simply as reproduction of the physical existence of individuals. Rather it is a definite form of their activity, a definite way of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life.* As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with what they produce, with *what* they produce and *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions which determine their production.[9]

Many of us find truth in that statement, not the whole truth, but an important truth. Like other animals, we humans must in every moment continue to gain "subsistence," gain our life, from the larger material world. And we do this in a highly dynamic but also profoundly intimate way, by the dialogue with the encompassing material world we establish through our human work. Perhaps religion in the twenty-first century will become a site of critical analysis concerning the new global organization of human labor, a site of active organizing to take up our place on Earth in a more grateful and responsible way.

But if religion does not do that, Karl Marx would not be surprised. Just as human work under the conditions of estranged labor is thought to be the means of individual survival, so hope under the conditions of religious estrangement is often conceived of in terms of individual escape. Both reflect human consciousness alienated from our active species being; and both are wrong.

NOTES

1. "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," p. 171.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. "German Ideology—Ideology in General," p. 100.
6. "Estranged Labor," p. 119.
7. "Concerning Feuerbach," p. 184.
8. "German Ideology—Ideology in General," p. 100.
9. Ibid, pp. 95–96.

"CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT" (1844)

In the following brief but powerful three essays we find, in a nutshell, the complaint Marx brings against religion. It is a complaint that begins in a positive and even generous way. For Marx, religion is "the self-esteem of man."[1] And given the oppressive conditions of the masses, that self-esteem expresses itself as the cry of "the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions."[2] Religion is a protest in the face of suffering. But for Marx this remains the expression of a consciousness that is inverted; it is the self-esteem of "man who has either not won through to himself or has already lost himself again."[3] Rather than lead to struggle and change, religion makes suffering sufferable*; it induces resignation before a "higher power" (god, karma, whatever).*

For Germany, the *criticism of religion* has been essentially completed, and the criticism of religion is the prerequisite of all criticism.

The *profane* existence of error is compromised as soon as its *heavenly oratio pro aris et focis* [plea on behalf of hearth and home] has been refuted. Man, who has found only the *reflection* of himself in the fantastic reality of heaven, where he sought a superman, will no longer feel disposed to find the mere *appearance* of himself, the non-man, where he seeks and must seek his true reality.

The foundation of irreligious criticism is: *Man makes religion,* religion does not make man. Religion is indeed the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself or has already lost himself again. But *man* is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is *the world of man,* state, society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an *inverted consciousness of the world,* because they are an *inverted world.* Religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual *point d'honneur,* its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, and its universal basis of consolation and justification. It is the *fantastic realization* of the human essence since the human essence has not acquired any true reality. The struggle against religion is therefore indirectly the struggle against *that world* whose spiritual *aroma* is religion.

Religious suffering is at one and the same time the *expression* of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people.

The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for their *real* happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to *call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions.* The criticism of religion is therefore in *embryo* the *criticism of that vale of tears* of which religion is the *halo.*

Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers on the chain not in order that man shall continue to bear that chain without fantasy or consolation but so that he shall throw off the chain and pluck the living flower. The criticism of religion disillusions man, so that he will think, act, and fashion his reality like a man who has discarded his illusions and regained his senses, so that he will move around himself as his own true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself.

It is therefore the *task of history,* once the *other-world of truth* has vanished, to establish the *truth of this world.* It is the immediate *task of philosophy,* which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its *unholy forms* once the *holy form* of human self-estrangement has been unmasked. Thus the criticism of

heaven turns into the criticism of earth, the *criticism of religion* into the *criticism of law* and the *criticism of theology* into the *criticism of politics.*

The following exposition—a contribution to this undertaking—concerns itself not directly with the original but with a copy, with the German *philosophy* of the state and of law. The only reason for this is that it is concerned with *Germany.*

If we were to begin with the German *status quo* itself, the result—even if we were to do it in the only appropriate way, i.e. negatively—would still be an *anachronism.* Even the negation of our present political situation is a dusty fact in the historical junk room of modern nations. If I negate powdered wigs, I am still left with unpowdered wigs. If I negate the situation in Germany in 1843, then according to the French calendar I have barely reached 1789, much less the vital center of our present age.

Indeed, German history prides itself on having traveled a road which no other nation in the whole of history has ever traveled before, or ever will again. We have shared the restorations of modern nations without ever having shared their revolutions. We have been restored firstly because other nations dared to make revolutions and secondly because other nations suffered counter-revolutions: on the one hand, because our masters were afraid, and on the other, because they were not afraid. With our shepherds to the fore, we only once kept company with freedom, on the *day of its interment.*

One school of thought that legitimizes the infamy of today with the infamy of yesterday, a school that stigmatizes every cry of the serf against the knout as mere rebelliousness once the knout has aged a little and acquired a hereditary significance and a history, a school to which history shows nothing but its *a posteriori,* as did the God of Israel to his servant Moses, the *historical school of law*—this school would have invented German history were it not itself an invention of that history. A Shylock, but a cringing Shylock, that swears by its bond, its historical bond, its Christian-Germanic bond, for every pound of flesh cut from the heart of the people.

On the other hand, good-natured enthusiasts, German chauvinists by temperament and free-thinking liberals by reflection, seek the history of our freedom beyond our history, in the primeval Teutonic forests. But how does the history of our freedom differ from that of the wild boar, if it is only to be found in the forests? And besides, everyone knows that what is shouted into a forest is echoed back again. So peace to the primeval Teutonic forests!

But *war* on conditions in Germany! By all means! They are *below the level of history,* they are *beneath all criticism,* but they remain an object of criticism, in the same way as the criminal who is beneath the level of humanity remains an object for the *executioner.* In its struggle against them criticism is not a pas-

sion of the head but the head of passion. It is not a scalpel but a weapon. Its object is its *enemy*, which it aims not to refute but to *destroy*. For the spirit of these conditions is already refuted. In themselves they are not *worthy of thought*: rather, they are *existences* as despicable as they are despised. Criticism itself does not require any further understanding of this object, for it is already clear about it. Criticism is no longer an *end in itself*, but simply a *means*. The essential force that moves it is *indignation* and its essential task is *denunciation*.

It must set out to depict the stifling pressure which all the different spheres of society exercise on one another, the universal but apathetic ill-feeling and the narrowness of vision that both acknowledges and misconstrues itself—all this contained within the framework of a system of government which lives by conserving all this wretchedness and is itself nothing but *wretchedness in government*.

What a spectacle! A society infinitely divided into the most diverse races which confront one another with their petty antipathies, their bad consciences and their brutal mediocrity and which, precisely because of their ambivalent and suspicious attitude towards one another, are dealt with by their *masters* without distinction, although with different formalities, as if their *existence* had been granted to them on *licence*. And they are even forced to recognize and acknowledge the fact that they are *dominated*, *ruled*, and *possessed* as a *privilege from heaven*! On the other hand there are the rulers themselves, whose greatness is in inverse proportion to their numbers!

The criticism which deals with these facts is involved in a *hand-to-hand fight*, and in such fights it does not matter what the opponent's rank is, or whether he is noble or *interesting*: what matters is to *hit* him. The important thing is not to permit the German a single moment of self-deception or resignation. The actual burden must be made even more burdensome by creating an awareness of it. The humiliation must be increased by making it public. Each sphere of German society must be depicted as the *partie honteuse* of that society and these petrified conditions must be made to dance by having their own tune sung to them! The people must be put in *terror* of themselves in order to give them *courage*. In this way a pressing need of the German nation will be fulfilled, and the needs of nations are themselves the ultimate causes of their satisfaction.

And even for *modern* nations this struggle against the restricted nature of the German *status quo* is not without interest, for the German *status quo* is the *undisguised consummation of the ancient régime* and the *ancien régime* is the *hidden defect of the modern state*. The struggle against the German political present is the struggle against the past of modern nations, which continue to be harassed by reminiscences of this past. It is instructive for them to see the

ancien régime, which in their countries has experienced its *tragedy,* play its *comic* role as a German phantom. Its history was *tragic* as long as it was the pre-existing power in the world and freedom a personal whim—in a word, as long as it believed, and had to believe, in its own privileges. As long as the *ancien régime,* as an established world order, was struggling against a world that was only just emerging, there was a world-historical error on its side but not a personal one. Its downfall was therefore tragic.

The present German regime, on the other hand—an anachronism, a flagrant contradiction of universally accepted axioms, the futility of the *ancien régime* displayed for all the world to see—only imagines that it still believes in itself and asks the world to share in its fantasy. If it believed in its own *nature,* would it try to hide that nature under the *appearance* of an alien nature and seek its salvation in hypocrisy and sophism? The modern *ancien régime* is merely the *clown* of a world order whose *real heroes* are dead. History is thorough and passes through many stages while bearing an ancient form to its grave. The last stage of a world-historical form is its *comedy.* The Greek gods, who already died once of their wounds in Aeschylus's tragedy *Prometheus Bound,* were forced to die a second death—this time a comic one—in Lucian's dialogues. Why does history take this course? So that mankind may part *happily* from its past. We lay claim to this *happy* historical destiny for the political powers of Germany.

But as soon as *modern* socio-political reality itself is subjected to criticism, i.e. as soon as criticism begins to deal with truly human problems, it finds itself outside the German *status quo,* or it would grasp its object at a level *below* its object. For example: the relationship of industry and the world of wealth in general to the political world is one of the main problems of the modern age. In which form does this problem begin to preoccupy the Germans? In the form of *protective tariffs,* of a *system of prohibitions* of *national economy.* German chauvinism has made the passage from men to matter, and one fine morning our cotton barons and iron heroes woke to find themselves transformed into patriots. In Germany, therefore, we are beginning to recognize the sovereignty of monopoly within our borders by granting it *sovereignty without them.* In Germany, therefore, we are about to begin at the point where France and England are about to conclude. The old and rotten order against which these countries are theoretically up in arms, and which they continue to bear only as one would bear chains, is greeted in Germany as the dawn of a beautiful future—a future which scarcely dares to make the transition from *cunning* theory to pitiless practice. In France and England the alternatives are posed: *political economy* or the *rule of society over wealth,* whereas in Germany they are posed: *national economy* or the *rule of private property over nationality.* In France and

England, therefore, it is a question of abolishing monopoly, which has progressed to its final consequences; in Germany it is a question of progressing to the final consequences of monopoly. There it is a question of the solution; here it is only a question of the collision. This is a good example of the *German* form of modern problems, an example of how our history, like some raw recruit, has up to now been restricted to repeating hackneyed routines that belong to the past of other nations.

So if Germany's development as a *whole* were not at a more advanced stage than Germany's *political* development, a German would not be able to participate in contemporary problems any more than can a *Russian*. But if the individual is not confined within the bounds of the nation, still less is the nation as a whole liberated through the liberation of an individual. The Scythians did not advance one step towards Greek culture because the Greeks numbered a Scythian among their philosophers.

Fortunately we Germans are not Scythians.

Just as ancient peoples lived their previous history in the imagination, in *mythology*, so we Germans have lived our future history in thought, in *philosophy*. We are the *philosophical* contemporaries of the present without being its *historical* contemporaries. German philosophy is the *ideal prolongation* of German history. Therefore when we criticize the *œuvres posthumes* of our ideal history, i.e. philosophy, instead of the *œuvres incomplètes* of our real history, our criticism stands at the center of those problems of which the present age says: *That is the question*. What for advanced nations is a *practical* quarrel with modern political conditions is for Germany, where such conditions do not yet exist, a *critical* quarrel with their reflection in philosophy.

The *German philosophy of law and of the state* is the only *German history* which stands on an equal footing with the *official* modern present. The German nation must therefore link its dream history to its present conditions and subject not only these conditions but also their abstract continuation to criticism. Its future cannot be *restricted* either to the direct negation of its real political and juridical conditions or to the direct realization of its ideal political and juridical conditions, for the direct negation of its real conditions is already present in its ideal conditions and it has almost *outlived* the direct realization of its ideal conditions by watching developments in neighboring nations. The *practical* political party in Germany is therefore right to demand the *negation of philosophy*. Where it goes wrong is in limiting itself to a demand which it does not and cannot achieve. It believes that it can carry out this negation by turning its back on philosophy and mumbling a few irritable and banal phrases over its shoulder at it. Its approach is so restricted that it does not even look upon philosophy as a part of *German* reality, or it regards it as *beneath* German practice and its

associated theories. You demand that we make the *real seeds of life* our point of departure, but you forget that the real seed of life of the German people has up to now only flourished inside its cranium. In a word: *You cannot transcend* [*aufheben*] *philosophy without realizing* [*verwirklichen*] *it.*

The same mistake, but with the factors reversed, was committed by the *theoretical* political party, which has its origins in philosophy.

This party saw in the present struggle *only the critical struggle of philosophy with the German world* and failed to realize that *previous philosophy* itself belongs to this world and is its *complement,* even though an ideal complement. It was critical towards its counterpart, but not towards itself, for it took the *presuppositions* of philosophy as its point of departure and either took for granted the conclusions of that philosophy or passed off demands and conclusions drawn from other quarters as direct philosophical demands and conclusions. But this is to ignore the fact that such demands and conclusions—assuming that they are legitimate—can be achieved only through the *negation of previous philosophy,* i.e. of philosophy as philosophy. We shall save for later a more detailed account of this party. Its basic defect can be summed up as follows: *It believed that it could realize philosophy without transcending it.*

The criticism of the *German philosophy of the state and of law,* which received its most consistent, thorough, and complete formulation from *Hegel,* is both these things: it is at once a critical analysis of the modern state and of the reality connected with it and a decisive negation of all previous *forms* of *political and juridical consciousness in Germany,* whose most refined and universal expression, elevated to the level of a *science,* is precisely the *speculative philosophy of law.* Only Germany could develop the speculative philosophy of law, this abstract and high-flown *thought* of the modern state, the reality of which remains part of another world (even if this other world is only the other side of the Rhine). Conversely, the *German* conception of the modern state, which abstracts from *real man,* was only possible because and in so far as the modern state itself abstracts from *real man* or satisfies the *whole* man in a purely imaginary way. The Germans have *thought* in politics what other nations have *done.* Germany has been their *theoretical conscience.* The abstraction and arrogance of Germany's thought always kept pace with the one-sided and stunted character of their reality. So if the *status quo* of the *German political system* is an expression of the *consummation of the ancien régime,* the completion of the thorn in the flesh of the modern state, then the *status quo* of *German political thought* is an expression of the *imperfection of the modern state,* the damaged condition of the flesh itself.

As the determined opponent of the previous form of *German* political consciousness, the criticism of the speculative philosophy of law finds its pro-

gression not within itself but in *tasks* which can only be solved in one way—through *practice* [*Praxis*].

We must then ask ourselves: can Germany attain a practice *à la hauteur des principes*, that is to say, a revolution that raises it not only to the *official level* of modern nations but to the *human level* that will be their immediate future?

Clearly the weapon of criticism cannot replace the criticism of weapons, and material force must be overthrown by material force. But theory also becomes a material force once it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses when it demonstrates *ad hominem*, and it demonstrates *ad hominem* as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself. Clear proof of the radicalism of German theory and its practical energy is the fact that it takes as its point of departure a decisive and *positive* transcendence of religion. The criticism of religion ends with the doctrine that *for man the supreme being is man*, and thus with the *categorical imperative to overthrow all conditions* in which man is a debased, enslaved, neglected, and contemptible being—conditions that are best described in the exclamation of a Frenchman on the occasion of a proposed tax on dogs: Poor dogs! They want to treat you like human beings!

For Germany, theoretical emancipation has a specific practical significance even from a historical point of view. For Germany's *revolutionary* past, in the form of the *Reformation*, is also theoretical. Just as it was then the *monk*, so it is now the *philosopher* in whose brain the revolution begins.

Luther certainly conquered servitude based on *devotion*, but only by replacing it with servitude based on *conviction*. He destroyed faith in authority, but only by restoring the authority of faith. He transformed the priests into laymen, but only by transforming the laymen into priests. He freed mankind from external religiosity, but only by making religiosity the inner man. He freed the body from its chains, but only by putting the heart in chains.

But even if Protestantism was not the true solution, it did pose the problem correctly. It was now no longer a question of the struggle of the layman with the *priest outside himself*, but rather of his struggle with his *own inner priest*, with his *priestly nature*. And if the Protestant transformation of the German laymen into priests emancipated the lay priests—the *princes* together with their clergy, the privileged and the philistines—the philosophical transformation of the priestly Germans into men will emancipate the *people*. But just as emancipation did not stop with the princes, so will secularization of property not stop with the *dispossession of the churches*, which was set going above all by hypocritical Prussia. At that time the Peasants' War, the most radical episode in German history, suffered defeat because of theology. Today, when theology itself has failed, the most unfree episode in German history, our *status quo*, will

founder on philosophy. On the eve of the Reformation official Germany was Rome's most unquestioning vassal. On the eve of its revolution Germany is the unquestioning vassal of lesser powers than Rome—of Prussia and Austria, of clod-hopping squires and philistines.

But a major difficulty appears to stand in the way of a *radical* German revolution.

The point is that revolutions need a *passive* element, a *material* basis. Theory is realized in a people only in so far as it is a realization of the people's needs. But will the enormous gap that exists between the demands of German thought and the responses of German reality now correspond to the same gap both between civil society and the state and civil society and itself? Will the theoretical needs be directly practical needs? It is not enough that thought should strive to realize itself; reality must itself strive towards thought.

But Germany did not pass through the intermediate stages of political emancipation at the same time as modern nations. Even the stages that it has left behind in theory it has not yet reached in practice. How is Germany, in one *salto mortale,* to override not only its own limitations but also those of the modern nations, to override limitations which in point of fact it ought to experience and strive for as liberation from its real limitations? A radical revolution can only be the revolution of radical needs, but the preconditions and seedbeds for such needs appear to be lacking.

Yet, even if Germany has only kept company with the development of the modern nations through the abstract activity of thought, without taking an active part in the real struggles of this development, it has nevertheless shared in the *sufferings* of this development without sharing in its pleasures and its partial satisfaction. Abstract activity on the one hand corresponds to abstract suffering on the other. Germany will therefore one day find itself at the level of European decadence before it has ever reached the level of European emancipation. It will be like a fetish-worshipper suffering from the diseases of Christianity.

If we examine the *German governments,* we find that as a result of the circumstances of the time, the situation in Germany, the standpoint of German education, and finally their own happy instincts they are driven to combine the *civilized defects* of the *modern political world,* whose advantages we lack, with the *barbaric defects* of the *ancien régime,* of which we have our full measure. In this way Germany must participate more and more, if not in the reason then at least in the unreason even of those state forms which have progressed beyond its own *status quo.* For example, is there any country in the world which shares as naïvely as so-called constitutional Germany all the illusions of the constitutional state without sharing any of the realities? Or was it just

an accident that the idea of combining the torments of censorship with the torments of the French September laws, which presuppose freedom of the press, was the invention of a German government? Just as the *gods* of all nations could be found in the Roman Pantheon, so the *sins* of all state forms will be found in the Holy Roman German Empire. That this eclecticism will take on unheard-of proportions is assured in particular by the *politico-aesthetic gourmandise* of a German king, who proposes to play all the roles of royalty—feudal and bureaucratic, absolute and constitutional, autocratic and democratic—if not in the person of the people then at least in his *own* person, and if not for the people, then at least for *himself. Germany, as a world of its own embodying all the deficiencies of the present political age,* will not be able to overcome the specifically German limitations without overcoming the universal limitation of the present political age.

It is not *radical* revolution or *universal human* emancipation which is a utopian dream for Germany; it is the partial, *merely* political revolution, the revolution which leaves the pillars of the building standing. What is the basis of a partial and merely political revolution? Its basis is the fact that one *part of civil society* emancipates itself and attains *universal* domination, that one particular class undertakes from its *particular situation* the universal emancipation of society. This class liberates the whole of society, but only on condition that the whole of society finds itself in the same situation as this class, e.g. possesses or can easily acquire money and education.

No class of civil society can play this role without awakening a moment of enthusiasm in itself and in the masses; a moment in which this class fraternizes and fuses with society in general, becomes identified with it and is experienced and acknowledged as its *universal representative*; a moment in which its claims and rights are truly the rights and claims of society itself and in which it is in reality the heart and head of society. Only in the name of the universal rights of society can a particular class lay claim to universal domination. Revolutionary energy and spiritual self-confidence are not enough to storm this position of liberator and to ensure thereby the political exploitation of all the other spheres of society in the interests of one's own sphere. If the *revolution of a people* and the *emancipation of a particular class* [*Klasse*] of civil society are to coincide, if *one* class is to stand for the whole of society, then all the deficiences of society must be concentrated in another class [*Stand*], one particular class must be the class which gives universal offence, the embodiment of a general limitation; one particular sphere of society must appear as the *notorious crime* of the whole of society, so that the liberation of this sphere appears as universal self-liberation. If one class [*Stand*] is to be the class of liberation *par excellence,* then another class must be the class of overt oppression.

The negative general significance of the French nobility and the French clergy determined the positive general significance of the class which stood nearest to and opposed to them—the *bourgeoisie*.

But in Germany every particular class lacks not only the consistency, acuteness, courage, and ruthlessness which would stamp it as the negative representative of society; equally, all classes lack that breadth of spirit which identifies itself, if only for a moment, with the spirit of the people, that genius which can raise material force to the level of political power, that revolutionary boldness which flings into the face of its adversary the defiant words: *I am nothing and I should be everything.* The main feature of German morality and honor, not only in individuals but in classes, is that *modest egoism* which asserts its narrowness and allows that narrowness to be used against it. The relationship of the different spheres of German society is therefore epic rather than dramatic. Each begins to experience itself and to set up camp alongside the others with its own particular claims, not as soon as it is oppressed but as soon as circumstances, without any contribution from the sphere concerned, create an inferior social stratum which it in its turn can oppress. Even the *moral self-confidence of the German middle class* is based simply on an awareness of being the general representative of the philistine mediocrity of all the other classes. It is therefore not only the German kings who mount the throne *mal-à-propos*, but every sphere of civil society which experiences defeat before it celebrates victory, develops its own limitations before it overcomes the limitations confronting it, and asserts its narrow-mindedness before it has had a chance to assert its generosity. As a result, even the opportunity of playing a great role has always passed by before it was ever really available and every class, as soon as it takes up the struggle against the class above it, is involved in a struggle with the class beneath it. Thus princes struggle against kings, bureaucrats against aristocrats, and the bourgeoisie against all of these, while the proletariat is already beginning to struggle against the bourgeoisie. The middle class scarcely dares to conceive of the idea of emancipation from its own point of view, and already the development of social conditions and the progress of political theory have demonstrated this point of view to be antiquated or at least problematical.

In France it is enough to be something for one to want to be everything. In Germany no one may be anything unless he renounces everything. In France partial emancipation is the basis of universal emancipation. In Germany universal emancipation is the *conditio sine qua non* of any partial emancipation. In France it is the reality, in Germany the impossibility, of emancipation in stages that must give birth to complete freedom. In France each class of the

people is a *political idealist* and experiences itself first and foremost not as a particular class but as the representative of social needs in general. The role of *emancipator* therefore passes in a dramatic movement from one class of the French people to the next, until it finally reaches that class which no longer realizes social freedom by assuming certain conditions external to man and yet created by human society, but rather by organizing all the conditions of human existence on the basis of social freedom. In Germany, however, where practical life is as devoid of intellect as intellectual life is of practical activity, no class of civil society has the need and the capacity for universal emancipation unless under the compulsion of its *immediate* situation, of *material* necessity and of its *chains themselves.*

So where is the *positive* possibility of German emancipation?

This is our answer. In the formation of a class with *radical chains,* a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, a class [*Stand*] which is the dissolution of all classes, a sphere which has a universal character because of its universal suffering and which lays claim to no *particular right* because the wrong it suffers is not a *particular wrong* but *wrong in general*; a sphere of society which can no longer lay claim to a *historical* title, but merely to a *human* one, which does not stand in one-sided opposition to the consequences but in all-sided opposition to the premises of the German political system; and finally a sphere which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from—and thereby emancipating—all the other spheres of society, which is, in a word, the *total loss* of humanity and which can therefore redeem itself only through the *total redemption of humanity.* This dissolution of society as a particular class is the *proletariat.*

The proletariat is only beginning to appear in Germany as a result of the emergent *industrial* movement. For the proletariat is not formed by *natural* poverty but by *artificially produced* poverty; it is formed not from the mass of people mechanically oppressed by the weight of society but from the mass of people issuing from society's *acute disintegration* and in particular from the dissolution of the middle class. (Clearly, however, the ranks of the proletariat are also gradually swelled by natural poverty and Christian-Germanic serfdom.)

When the proletariat proclaims the *dissolution of the existing world order,* it is only declaring the secret of its own existence, for it *is* the *actual* dissolution of that order. When the proletariat demands the *negation of private property,* it is only elevating to a *principle for society* what society has already made a principle *for the proletariat,* what is embodied in the proletariat, without its consent, as the negative result of society. The proletarian then finds that he has the same right, in relation to the world which is coming into being, as the *German*

King in relation to the world as it is at present when he calls the people *his* people just as he calls his horse *his* horse. By calling the people his private property, the king is merely declaring that the owner of private property is king.

Just as philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *intellectual* weapons in philosophy; and once the lightning of thought has struck deeply into this virgin soil of the people, emancipation will transform the *Germans* into *men*.

Let us sum up the result:

The only liberation of Germany which is *practically* possible is liberation from the point of view of *that* theory which declares man to be the supreme being for man. Germany can emancipate itself from the *Middle Ages* only if it emancipates itself at the same time from the *partial* victories over the Middle Ages. In Germany *no* form of bondage can be broken without breaking *all* forms of bondage. Germany, which is renowned for its *thoroughness*, cannot make a revolution unless it is a *thorough* one. The *emancipation of the German* is the *emancipation of man*. The *head* of this emancipation is *philosophy*, its *heart* the *proletariat*. Philosophy cannot realize itself without the transcendence [*Aufhebung*] of the proletariat, and the proletariat cannot transcend itself without the realization [*Verwirklichung*] of philosophy.

When all the inner conditions are met, the *day of the German resurrection* will be heralded by the *crowing of the Gallic cock*.

Notes

1. "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," p. 171.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

"CONCERNING FEUERBACH" (1845)

I

The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism (that of Feuerbach included) is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object or of contemplation*, but not as *sensuous human activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the *active* side was developed abstractly by idealism—which, of course, does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from the thought objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objec-*

tive activity. Hence, in *Das Wesen des Christentums,* he regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and fixed only in its dirty-judaical manifestation. Hence he does not grasp the significance of "revolutionary," of "practical-critical," activity.

II

The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question. Man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely *scholastic* question.

III

The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. This doctrine must, therefore, divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as *revolutionary practice.*

IV

Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, of the duplication of the world into a religious world and a secular one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. But that the secular basis detaches itself from itself and establishes itself as an independent realm in the clouds can only be explained by the cleavages and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must, therefore, in itself be both understood in its contradiction and revolutionized in practice. Thus, for instance, after the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be destroyed in theory and in practice.

V

Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract thinking,* wants *contemplation;* but he does not conceive sensuousness as *practical,* human-sensuous activity.

VI

Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the *human* essence. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations.

Feuerbach, who does not enter upon a criticism of this real essence, is consequently compelled:

1. To abstract from the historical process and to fix the religious sentiment as something by itself and to presuppose an abstract—*isolated*—human individual.

2. Essence, therefore, can be comprehended only as "genus," as an internal, dumb generality which *naturally* unites the many individuals.

VII

Feuerbach, consequently, does not see that the "religious sentiment" is itself a social product, and that the abstract individual whom he analyzes belongs to a particular form of society.

VIII

All social life is essentially *practical.* All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

IX

The highest point reached by contemplative materialism, that is, materialism which does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is the contemplation of single individuals and of civil society.

X

The standpoint of the old materialism is civil society; the standpoint of the new is human society, or social humanity.

XI

The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point is to *change* it.

"SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY" (1847)

"What is the alpha and omega of the Christian faith? The dogma of original sin and salvation. And therein lies the link of solidarity among humanity at its highest potential; one for all and all for one."

Happy people! The *cardinal question* is solved forever. The proletariat will find two inexhaustible life sources under the double wings of the Prussian eagle

and the Holy Ghost: first, the income tax surplus over and above the ordinary and extraordinary needs of the state, which surplus is equal to null; and second, the revenues from the heavenly domains of original sin and salvation, which are likewise equal to null. Both of these nulls provide a splendid ground for the one-third of the nation that has no land for its subsistence, and a powerful support for another third which is in decline. In any case, imaginary surpluses, original sin, and salvation will satisfy the hunger of the people in quite a different way from the long speeches of the liberal deputies!

It is said further: "In the 'Our Father' we pray: 'Lead us not into temptation.' And what we ask for ourselves we must also practice toward our neighbors. But our social conditions do indeed tempt man, and excessive misery incites to crime."

And *we,* the gentlemen bureaucrats, judges, and consistorial councilors of the Prussian State, exercise this respect [for our fellow men] by joyfully wracking people on the wheel, beheading, imprisoning, and flogging, and thereby "leading" the proletarians "into temptation," so that later they too can wrack, behead, imprison, and flog us. And that will not fail to happen.

"Such conditions," the consistorial councilor declares, "a Christian State *must not* tolerate; it must find a remedy for them."

Yes, with absurd babble about society's duties of solidarity, with imaginary surpluses and blank checks drawn on God the Father, Son, and Company.

"We can also be spared the already tedious talk about communism," our observant consistorial councilor remarks. "If those whose calling it is would only develop the social principles of Christianity, the communists would soon become silent."

The social principles of Christianity have now had eighteen hundred years to develop, and need no further development by the Prussian consistorial councilors.

The social principles of Christianity justified slavery in antiquity, glorified medieval serfdom, and, when necessary, also know how to defend the oppression of the proletariat, although they may do so with a piteous face.

The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressed class, and for the latter they have only the pious wish that the former will be benevolent.

The social principles of Christianity transfer the consistorial councilors' settlement of all infamies to heaven, and thereby justify the continuation of these infamies on earth.

The social principles of Christianity declare all vile acts of the oppressors against the oppressed to be either just punishment for original sin and other sins, or suffering that the Lord in his infinite wisdom has destined for those redeemed.

The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-contempt, abasement, submission, humility—in brief, all the qualities of the *canaille;* and the proletariat, not wishing to be treated as *canaille,* needs its courage, its self-respect, its pride, and its sense of independence even more than its bread.

The social principles of Christianity are hypocritical, but the proletariat is revolutionary.

So much for the social principles of Christianity.

PART V

Occasional Writings

In these occasional essays and outline notes we find Marx and Engels commenting on contemporary religious events and placing them in continuity with Western religious history. The two essays by Engels reflect the same interest. Both were impressed with what religion can do when it becomes the energy and organizing instrument of the poor in their struggle against the powerful. We end with three letters. One by Jenny Marx (1865) takes pride in the debates exploding around Darwin and his hypothesis concerning evolution. Another is from Marx to Engels (1864) complaining about failing health. And the last letter, written late in Marx's life (1881) shows that he shared with Engels a continuing interest in religion and its messianic vision, its utopian hope of revolutionary change.

MARX

"THE DECAY OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY" (FROM *NEW YORK TRIBUNE*) (1854)

The days in which religious considerations were a governing element in the wars of Western Europe are, it seems, long gone by. The Treaty of Westphalia, in 1648, which wound up the Thirty Years' War in Germany, marks the epoch when such questions lost their force and disappeared as a prime cause of international strife. The attitude of the two great powers of Western Europe in the present war against Russia is a striking illustration of this truth. There we see England, professedly Protestant, allied with France, professedly Catholic ("damnably heretical" as they naturally are in each other's eyes, according to the orthodox phraseology of both), for the purpose of defending Turkey, a Mohammedan power whose destruction they ought most religiously to desire, against the aggressions of "holy" Russia, a power Christian like themselves; and though the position of Austria and Prussia is more equivocal than that of England and France, the maintenance of the Mussulman Empire in its integrity against the assaults of its Christian neighbor to the north is an object that has been avowed and guaranteed equally with France and England by the two great powers of Christian Germany. Religious considerations are certainly not the influences which restrain them from action against Russia.

To perfectly appreciate this state of things we must call to mind the period of the Crusades, when Western Europe, as late as the eighteenth century, undertook a "holy war" against the "infidel" Turks for the possession of the Holy Sepulchre. Now Western Europe not only acquiesces in Mussulman jurisdiction over the Sepulchre but goes so far as to laugh at the contests and rivalries of the Greek and Latin monks for undivided possession of a shrine once so much coveted by all Christendom; and when Christian Russia steps forward to "protect" the Christian subjects of the Porte, the Western Europe of today arrays itself in arms against the czar to thwart a design which it would once have deemed highly laudable and righteous. To drive the Moslems out of Europe would once have roused the zeal of England and France; to prevent the Turks from being driven out of Europe is now the most cherished resolve of those nations. So broad a gulf stands between Europe of the nineteenth and Europe of the thirteenth century! So fallen away since the latter epoch is the political influence of religious dogma.

We have carefully watched for any expression of the purely ecclesiastical view of the European crisis, and have found only one pamphlet by a Cambridge D.D. and one North British review for England, and the Paris *Univers* for France,

which have dogmatically represented the defense of a Mohammedan power by Christendom as absolutely sinful; and these pronunciamentos have remained without an echo in either country. Whence is this?

From the period of the Protestant Reformation, the upper classes in every European nation, whether it remained Catholic or adopted Protestantism—and especially the statesmen, legalists, and diplomats—began to unfasten themselves individually from all religious belief, and become so-called free-thinkers. This intellectual movement in the higher circles manifested itself without reserve in France from the time of Louis XIV, resulting in the universal predilection for what was denominated philosophy during the eighteenth century. But when Voltaire found residence in France no longer safe, not because of his opinions, nor because he had given oral expression to them, but because he had communicated them by his writings to the whole reading public, he betook himself to England and testified that he found the solons of high life in London still "freer" than those of Paris. Indeed, the men and women of the court of Charles II, Bolingbroke, the Walpoles, Hume, Gibbon, and Charles Fox, are names which all suggest a prevalent unbelief in religious dogmas, and a general adhesion to the philosophy of that age on the part of the upper classes, statesmen, and politicians of England. This may be called, by way of distinction, the era of aristocratic revolt against ecclesiastical authority. Comte, in one short sentence, has characterized this situation: "From the opening of the revolutionary period in the sixteenth century this system of hypocrisy has been more and more elaborated in practice, *permitting the emancipation of all minds of a certain bearing,* on the tacit condition that they should aid in protracting the submission of the masses. This was eminently the policy of the Jesuits."

This brings us down to the period of the French Revolution, when the masses, first of France, and afterward of all Western Europe, along with a desire for political and social freedom, began to entertain an ever growing aversion to religious dogma. The total abolition of Christianity as a recognized institution of state by the French Republican Convention of 1793, and since then the gradual repeal in Western Europe, wherever the popular voice has had power, of religious tests and political and civil disabilities of the same character, together with the Italian movement of 1848, sufficiently announce the well-known direction of the popular mind in Europe. We are still witnesses of this epoch, which may be characterized as the era of democratic revolt against ecclesiastical authority.

But this very movement among the masses since the French Revolution, bound up as it was with the movement for social equality, brought about in high quarters a violent reaction in favor of church authority. Nobility and

clergy, lords temporal and lords spiritual, found themselves equally threatened by the popular movement, and it naturally came to pass that the upper class of Europe threw aside their skepticism in public life and made an outward alliance with the state churches and their systems. This reaction was most apparent in France, first under Bonaparte and during the Restoration under the older branch of the Bourbons, but it was not less the case with the rest of Western Europe. In our own day we have seen renewed on a smaller scale this patching up of an alliance offensive and defensive between the upper classes and the ecclesiastical interest. Since the epoch of the 1830s the statesmen had begun to manifest anew a spirit of independence toward ecclesiastical control, but the events of 1848 threw them back into the arms of Mother Church. Again France gave the clearest exemplification of this phenomenon. In 1849, when the terror of the democratic deluge was at its height, Messrs. Thiers, De Hauranne, and the Universitarians (who had passed for atheists with the clergy), together with the so-called Liberal Opposition, were unanimous in supporting that admirably qualified "savior of religion," M. Bonaparte [Napoleon III], in his project for the violent restoration of the Pope of Rome, while the Whig ministry of Protestant England, at whose head was a member of the ultra-Protestant family of Russell, were warm in their approval of the same expedition. This religious restoration by such processes was indeed redeemed from universal ridicule only by the extremely critical posture of affairs which for the moment, in the interest of "order," did not allow the public men of Europe to indulge in the sense of the ludicrous.

But the submission of the classes of leading social influence to ecclesiastical control, which was hollow and hypocritical at the beginning of this century after the Revolution of 1792, has been far more precarious and superficial since 1848, and is only acknowledged by those classes so far as it suits their immediate political interest. The humiliating position of utter dependence which the ecclesiastical power sustains toward the temporal arm of government has been made fully manifest since 1848. The Pope, indebted to the French Government for his present tenure of the chair of St. Peter; the French clergy, for the bulk of their salaries, blessing trees of liberty and proclaiming the sovereignty of the people, and afterward canonizing the present Emperor of France as the chosen instrument of God and the savior of religion, their old proper doctrines of legitimacy and the divine right of kings being in each case laid aside with the downfall of the corresponding political regime; the Anglican clergy, whose *ex officio* head is a temporal Queen, dependent for promotion on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, now generally a liberal, and looking for favors and support against popular encroachment to Parlia-

ment in which the liberal element is ever on the increase—constitute an *ensemble* from which it would be absurd to expect acts of pure ecclesiastical independence, except in the normally impossible case of an overwhelming popular support to fall back upon.

Such was the position of affairs in 1853, when the governing classes of England and France deemed it necessary and politic to espouse the cause of the Ottoman Porte against the Christian Czar; and that policy was not only sanctioned, but in a measure forced upon them by the popular sentiment of the two nations. Then the governments of France and England entered upon a policy totally inconsistent with religious considerations, and threw off unhesitatingly their feigned ecclesiastical alliances. Then at length the upper-class current of revolt (which had been so long dissembled) formed a juncture with the broad popular current, and the two together, like the Missouri and the Mississippi, rolled onward a tide of opinion which the ecclesiastical power saw it would be madness to encounter. Beneath this twofold assault the pure ecclesiastical point of view has not dared to manifest itself; while, on the contrary, the state clergy of England, on the appointed day of the national fast and humiliation, had to pray and preach patriotic sermons on behalf of the success of the Crescent and its allies. These considerations seem to afford a rational explanation of two apparent anomalies with which we started; namely, the defense of the Crescent by allied Catholic and Protestant Europe against the assault of the Cross, as represented by Christian Russia, and the fact that no voice of any influence has been lifted up to denounce to Christendom the moral position in which it is placed.

The coalition between the politicians of Western Europe and the popular opinion in behalf of a purely secular policy is likely to generate ulterior consequences and to subject ecclesiastical influence to further shocks from its old accomplices, the politicians. It is doubtless owing to the ripeness of the public mind in this respect that Lord Palmerston ventured to refuse the request of the Edinburgh Presbytery for a day of public fast and humiliation to avert the divine scourge of cholera, the Home Secretary audaciously averring that prayers would be of no consequence unless they cleansed their streets and habitations, and that cholera was generated by natural causes, such as deleterious gases from decomposed vegetable matter. The vain and unscrupulous Palmerston knew that buffeting the clergy would be a cheap and easy way of acquiring popularity, otherwise he would not have ventured on the experiment.

A further evidence of the extreme incompetence of ecclesiastical policy to answer the exigencies of the European situation is found in the consideration that the ecclesiastical view, if logically carried out, would condemn Catholic

Europe to total indifference to the present European crisis; for though it might be permissible for Anglican orthodoxy to side with the Greek Cross against the Turkish Crescent, Catholic Europe could not unite with so impious a denier of the authority of the successor of St. Peter and so unhallowed a pretender to the highest spiritual functions as the Czar of Russia, and would apparently have no other opinion to utter than that both the belligerent parties were inspired by Satan!

To complete the disparagement which ecclesiastical authority has undergone in the present European crisis, it is patent to the world that while the advanced communities of Western Europe are in a forward stage of ecclesiastical decay, on the other hand, in barbarian Russia the state church retains a powerful and undiminished vigor. While Western Europe, discarding religious biases, has advanced in defense of "right against might" and "for the independence of Europe," "holy" Russia has claimed for its war of might against right a religious sanction as a war of the vice-regent of God against the infidel Turks. It is true that Nesselrode, in his state papers, has never had the assurance in the face of Europe to appeal to the ecclesiastical aspect of the question, and this is in itself a remarkable symptom of the decline of the ecclesiastical sentiment; this method of treatment is reserved by the Russian Court for internal use among the ignorant and credulous Muscovites, and the miracle pictures, the relics, the crusading proclamations of the Russian generals show how much stress is there laid upon the religious phase of the struggle for inflaming the zeal of the Russian people and army. Even the St. Petersburg journals do not omit to cast in the teeth of France and England the reproach that they are fighting on behalf of the abhorred Crescent against the religion of the Cross. Such a contrast between religious Russia and secular France and England is worthy of a profound and thorough examination, which we cannot undertake to give it, our object being simply to call to these large, impressive, and novel facts a degree of attention they have not hitherto received. They are facts which perhaps the philosophic and religious historians of the future will alone be able to appreciate at their exact value. They appear, however, to constitute an important step in the great movement of the world toward abrogating absolute authority and establishing the independence of individual judgment and conscience in the religious as well as the political sphere of life. To defend or attack that movement is not our purpose; our duty is discharged in the simple attestation of its progress.

EXCERPTS FROM *GRUNDRISSE* (1858)

The *Grundrisse (A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy)*, written 1857–1858, consists of detailed notes rather than a systematic outline.

Luther as an Economist

Thus Misselden, a London merchant, in his book, *Free Trade, or, the Meanes to Make Trade Florish.* London, 1622 (p. 7). He compares the order of the exchange system of money and commodities with the fate of both sons of old Jacob, who put his right hand on the younger son and the left one on the older one. . . .

In the same way as Misselden, the oldest German national economist, Dr. Martin Luther, complains: "This it cannot be denied, that buying and selling are a necessary thing, with which one cannot dispense, and can well be of Christian use, especially in things that serve need and honor. For the Patriarchs too sold and bought: cattle, wool, grain, butter, milk, and other goods. These are God's gifts, which he gives from the earth and apportions among men. But the foreign commerce which brings goods from Calcutta and India and such, those precious silks and gold works and spices, which only serve for splendor and are of no practical use, and suck the money from country and people, ought not to be permitted. . . ."

The Medieval Church and Money

The imposition by the Popes of church tax estimates in practically all Catholic Christian countries contributed not a little to the development of the entire monetary system in industrial Europe and, in consequence, to the genesis of various attempts at circumventing the Church's command (against interest). The Pope made use of the Lombards for the exaction of investiture moneys and other dues from the archbishoprics. These leading usurers and pawnbrokers were under papal protection. Known as long ago as the middle of the twelfth century, they called themselves "official *usurarii,*" "Roman episcopal money dealers," in England. Some bishops of Basel, among others, pawned to Jews episcopal rings, silken garments, all the Church paraphernalia, for trifling sums, on which they paid interest. But bishops, abbots, priests themselves also

practiced usury with Church paraphernalia by pawning them to Tuscan money dealers from Florence, Siena, and other cities for a portion of the gain. . . .

When money is the *universal equivalent, the general power of purchasing,* everything is purchasable, everything is exchangeable for money. But a thing can be transformed into money only when it is alienated, when the possessor has divested himself of it. Everything external or of indifference to the individual is therefore alienable. The so-called *inalienable, eternal* possessions and the immovable, fixed property relationships corresponding to them thus break down before money. Furthermore, when money itself is in circulation merely to be exchanged for gratification, etc.—for values that can in the end be dissolved in purely personal gratifications—everything becomes valuable only to the extent that it exists for the individual. The independent value of things—its relativity, its exchangeability—except in so far as it exists merely for other things, is thereby dissolved. Everything is sacrificed to egoistical gratification. For just as everything is alienable for money, so everything is obtainable with money. Everything is to be had for "cash money," since, in existing externally to the individual, it is to be caught by fraud, violence, etc. Hence everything is acquirable by everybody, and it is a matter of accident as to what the individual may or may not acquire, since it depends only on the money in his possession. Thereby the individual by himself is placed as the lord of everything. There are no absolute values, since value as such is relative to money. There is nothing inalienable, since everything is alienable through money. There is nothing higher, more sacred, etc., since everything is acquirable with money. The "*res sacrae*" ["holy things"] and "*religiosae,*" which could be "*in nullius bonis,*" "*nec aestimationem recipere, nec obliquari alienarique posse*" ["could neither have money estimation nor be put aside"], which are exempt from "*commercio hominum*" ["commercial man"], do not exist before money—as all are equal before God. Beautiful, how the Roman Church in the Middle Ages is itself the chief propagandist of money.

As the Church law against usury had long lost all meaning, [Pope] Martin V also abolished the word itself in 1425 . . . In no country in the Middle Ages was there a general rate of interest. Only the priests were strict. Uncertainty of judicial institutions for the security of loans. Hence the higher the interest rate in individual cases. The scanty circulation of money, the necessity to pay in cash, since the exchange business is still undeveloped. Hence great variation in the consideration of interest and the notion of usury. In the times of Charlemagne, it was considered usurious only when a hundred percent was charged. In Lindau and Bodensee, 1344, native citizens charged 216 2/3 percent. In Zurich the city council set the legal rate of interest at 43 1/3 percent . . . In Italy, 40 percent occasionally had to be paid, although from the

twelfth to the fourteenth centuries the usual rate did not exceed 20 percent . . . Verona ordered the legal rate at 12 1/2 percent . . . Frederick II in his decree . . . 10 percent, but applying only to Jews. He would not deign to speak for Christians. In Rhenish Germany in the thirteenth century 10 percent was the usual.

Christianity's Criticism of Heathenism

The Christian religion was able to contribute to an objective understanding of earlier mythologies only when its self-criticism was to a certain extent prepared, as it were potentially. Similarly, only when the self-criticism of bourgeois society had begun was bourgeois political economy able to understand the feudal, ancient, and Oriental economies. Insofar as bourgeois political economy did not simply identify itself with the past in a mythological manner, its criticism of earlier economies—especially of the feudal system, against which it still had to wage a direct struggle—resembled the criticism that Christianity directed against heathenism, or Protestantism directed against Catholicism.

EXCERPTS FROM *CAPITAL* (1867)

The Furies of Private Interest—Churchly and Other

In the field of political economy, free scientific inquiry meets not merely the same enemy as in all other fields. The peculiar nature of the material it treats brings into the field of battle against it the most violent, the most petty, the most hateful passions of the human breast, the furies of private interest. The High Church of England, for example, will more readily pardon an attack on 38 of its 39 Articles of Faith than on 1/39th of its money income. Nowadays, atheism itself is *culpa levis* [a small sin], as compared with criticism of inherited property relationships. Still, there is an unmistakable advance. I am referring, for example, to the Blue Book published a few weeks ago, "Correspondence with Her Majesty's Missions Abroad, Regarding Industrial Questions and Trades Unions." The representatives of the English Crown abroad declare here in so many blunt words that in Germany, in France, in brief, in all the civilized states of the European continent, a transformation in the existing relations between capital and labor is as palpable and as inevitable

as in England. At the same time, on the other side of the Atlantic, Mr. Wade, Vice-President of the United States of North America, declared in public meetings: After the abolition of slavery, a transformation of the relations between capital and landed property is the order of the day! These are signs of the times, not to be hidden by purple mantles or black cassocks. They do not signify that tomorrow a miracle will happen. They show that within the ruling classes themselves the presentiment is dawning that the present society is not solid crystal, but is an organism capable of transformation and in constant process of transformation.

Religion and the Material Conditions of Society

For a society of commodity producers, whose general social relationship of production consists of retaining their relation to their products as commodities, and hence as values, and thereby reducing their private labor to a form of homogeneous human labor—for such a society, Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, particularly in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, etc., is the most suitable form of religion. In the modes of production of ancient Asia, of Antiquity, etc., we find that the conversion of products into commodities, and hence the existence of men as mere producers of commodities, plays a subordinate role, which, however, increases in importance as the ancient communities approach closer and closer to the stage of their decline. Trading nations proper exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in Intermundia, or like the Jews in the pores of Polish society. These ancient social organisms of production are extraordinarily more simple and transparent than the bourgeois ones, but they are based either on the immaturity of the individual man, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him naturally with his own species, or on direct master-and-servant relationships. They are conditioned by a lower stage of development of the productive power of labor and the correspondingly encompassing relationships of men within their material life-generating processes, and hence to each other and to nature. This actual narrowness is reflected ideally in the ancient worship of nature and in folk religions. The religious reflex of the real world can vanish altogether only when the relationships of practical everyday life offer men daily visible and reasonable relationships to each other and to nature. The shape of the life process of society, that is, the material process of production, strips off its misty veil only when it is put forth as a product of freely associated men, under their conscious con-

trol according to plan. This, however, requires a material groundwork of society, or a series of material conditions of existence which, in their turn, are the natural product of a long and painful process of development.

Political economy has, to be sure, analyzed, even if incompletely, value and its magnitude, and discovered the hidden content in these forms. It has never asked the question why that content assumes that form, and why labor is represented by the value of its product and the labor time by the magnitude of that labor product. Formulas which carry on their forehead the inscription that they belong to a state of society in which the productive process has mastery over man, and man does not yet have mastery over the productive process—such formulas appear to the bourgeois consciousness as much a self-evident necessity of nature as productive labor itself. Hence prebourgeois forms of the social organism of production are treated by them in much the same way as the Church Fathers treated pre-Christian religions.

St. Jerome

In order, therefore, that a commodity may in practice act effectively as exchange value, it must quit its bodily shape, must transform itself from mere imaginary into real gold, although to the commodity such transubstantiation may be more difficult than to the Hegelian "concept," the transition from "necessity" to "freedom," or to a lobster the casting of his shell, or to the Church Father St. Jerome the stripping off of Old Adam.[1]

St. Peter

If the owner of the iron were to go to the owner of some other worldly commodity, and were to refer him to the price of the iron as proof that it was already money, the owner of the latter would reply as did St. Peter to Dante in reciting to him the creed:

Assai bene è trascorsa
d'esta moneta già la lega e'l peso,
Ma dimmi se tu l'hai nella tua borsa.

Working on the Sabbath

In England, for example, even now occasionally in rural districts a worker is condemned to imprisonment for desecrating the Sabbath by working in the little garden in front of his house. The same worker is punished for breach of contract if he stays away from his metal, paper, or glass works, even if it be from a religious whim. The orthodox Parliament has no ear for Sabbath desecration if it occurs in the "process of making" capital. A memorial (August 1863) in which the London day laborers in fish and poultry shops asked for the abolition of Sunday labor states that their work in the first six days of the week runs to an average fifteen-hour day, and on Sunday eight to ten hours. One learns from this memorial that the ticklish gourmandise of the aristocratic hypocrites of Exeter Hall encourages this "Sunday labor." These "holy ones," so zealous *in cute curanda* [in the care of their physical well-being], show their Christianity by the humility with which they bear the overwork, the privations, and the hunger of other persons. *Obsequium ventris istis perniciosius est.* [Gluttony is for them (the workers) much more pernicious.]

The Material Basis of Religion

Darwin has turned our attention to the history of the technology of nature, that is, to the formation of the organs of plants as instruments of production for the life of plants and animals. Does not the history of the formation of the productive organs of social man, the material basis of all social organization, deserve equal attention? And would it not be easier to compose, since, as Vico says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the one and not the other? Technology reveals the active relationship of man to nature, the direct production process which sustains his life, and thereby it also lays bare his social life relationships and the mental conceptions flowing from them. Every history, even of religion, that is abstracted from this material basis is—uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of misty religious concepts than, conversely, to develop from actual life relationships their heavenly forms. The latter method is the only materialistic, and hence the only scientific method.

Economic Original Sin

This primitive accumulation plays in political economy approximately the same role as original sin in theology. Adam bit into the apple, and thereupon sin came over the human race. Its origin is explained by its being told as an anecdote of the past. In times long past there was, on the one side, a diligent, intelligent, and above all frugal elite; and, on the other, lazy rascals spending their substance, and more, in dissipation. The legend of the theological original sin tells us, to be sure, how man came to be condemned to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow; but the history of economic original sin reveals to us why there are people to whom this is by no means necessary. Never mind! So it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter, in the end, had nothing to sell except their own skin. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great mass that, despite all its labor, has nothing to sell but itself, and the wealth of the few that increases constantly, although they have long since ceased to work. Such stale childishness in defense of property is still being chewed over with statesmanlike solemnity by M. Thiers, for example, to the French who once were so intellectual. But as soon as the question of property comes into play, it becomes a sacred duty to adhere to the standpoint of the children's fable as the only one fit for all ages and states of development. In actual history, it is known, conquest, enslavement, robbery with murder, in short, violence, play the great role. In gentle political economy, the idyllic reigns from way back.

The Reformation and the Pauperization of the Masses

The process of forcible expropriation of the people in the sixteenth century received a new and frightful impulse from the Reformation, and from the consequent colossal theft of Church property. At the time of the Reformation, the Catholic Church was the feudal proprietor of a great portion of English soil and landed property. The suppression of the monasteries, etc., hurled their inmates into the proletariat. The Church estates themselves were largely given away to rapacious royal favorites, or sold at a ridiculous price to speculating tenant farmers and citizens, who drove out, *en masse,* the old, hereditary subtenants and combined their holdings into one. The legally guaranteed property of the poorer country people in a portion of the Church's tithes was tacitly confiscated. "*Pauper ubique jacet*" ["The pauper is everywhere subdued"], cried Queen Elizabeth after a journey through England. In the forty-third year of her

reign it was finally necessary to recognize pauperism officially by the introduction of a poor tax.

"The authors of this law seem to have been ashamed to state the grounds of it, for [contrary to traditional usage] it has no preamble whatever."[2]

By the sixteenth [year of the reign] of Charles I . . . it was declared perpetual, and in fact only in 1834 did it take a new and harsher form. The immediate effects of the Reformation were not its most lasting ones. Church property had formed the religious bulwark of the traditional landed property relationships. With its fall, these were no longer tenable.[3]

Protestant Parsons and the Population Theory

If the reader reminds me of Malthus, whose *Essay on Population* appeared in 1798, I remind him that this work in its first form is nothing more than a schoolboyish, superficial plagiary of Defoe, Sir James Stewart, Townsend, Franklin, Wallace, etc., and does not contain a single sentence thought out by himself. The great sensation this pamphlet caused was due solely to party interest. The French Revolution had found passionate defenders in the United Kingdom; the "principle of population," slowly worked out in the eighteenth century, and then in the midst of a great social crisis proclaimed with drums and trumpets as the infallible antidote to the teachings of Condorcet, etc., was greeted with jubilance by the English oligarchy as the great destroyer of all hankerings after human development. Malthus, hugely astonished at his success, gave himself to stuffing into his book materials superficially compiled, and adding to it new matter, not discovered but annexed by him. Note further: Although Malthus was a parson of the High Church of England, he had taken the monastic vow of celibacy. This was one of the conditions of a fellowship in the Protestant University at Cambridge: "We do not allow the members of the Colleges to be married; as soon as one takes a wife he ceases forthwith to be a member of the College." (*Reports of Cambridge University Commission*, p. 172.) This circumstance favorably distinguishes Malthus from the other Protestant parsons, who have by themselves shuffled off the Catholic command of priestly celibacy and have taken "Be fruitful and multiply" as their special mission, so that they generally contribute everywhere to an increase of population to a really indecent degree, while at the same time they preach to the workers the "principle of population." It is characteristic that the economical burlesque of the Fall of Man, Adam's apple, the "urgent appetite," the "checks which tend to blunt the shafts of Cupid," as Parson Townsend merrily puts it—that this ticklish point was and is monopolized by the Reverends

of Protestant theology, or rather of the Protestant church. With the exception of the Venetian monk Ortes, an original and clever writer, most of the population-theory teachers are Protestant parsons. For example, Bruckner, *Théorie du Système animal,* in which the whole subject of modern population theory is exhausted, and to which the passing quarrel between Quesnay and his pupil, Mirabeau *père,* furnished ideas on the same topic; then Parson Wallace, Parson Townsend, Parson Malthus, and his pupil the arch-Parson Thomas Chalmers, to say nothing of the lesser Reverend scribblers in this line. Originally political economy was studied by philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, Hume; by businessmen and statesmen like Thomas More, Temple, Sully, De Witt, North, Law, Vanderlint, Cantillon, Franklin; and in theory particularly, and with the greatest success, by medical men like Petty, Barbon, Mandeville, Quesnay. Even in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Reverend Mr. Tucker, an important economist of his time, apologized for occupying himself with Mammon. Later, and with this very "principle of population," the hour of the Protestant parsons struck. As if he had a presentiment of their business bungling, Petty, who treats population as the basis of wealth, and was, like Adam Smith, an outspoken enemy of the parsons, says: "That religion best flourishes when the Priests are most mortified, as was before said of the Law, which best flourisheth when lawyers have least to do." He therefore advises the Protestant parsons, if they will not once and for all follow the Apostle Paul and "mortify" themselves by celibacy, "not to breed more Churchmen than the benefices, as they are now shared out, will receive, that is to say, if there be places for about twelve thousand in England and Wales, it will not be safe to breed up twenty-four thousand ministers, for then the twelve thousand which are unprovided for will seek ways to get themselves a livelihood, which they cannot do more easily than by persuading the people that the twelve thousand incumbents do poison or starve their souls, and misguide them in their way to Heaven." (Petty, *A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions,* p. 57.) Adam Smith's position vis-à-vis the Protestant priesthood of his time is characterized by the following. In *A Letter to A. Smith, LL.D, on the Life, Death and Philosophy of his Friend, David Hume. By One of the People called Christians* (4th ed., Oxford, 1784), Dr. Horne, High Church Bishop of Norwich, reproves Adam Smith because in a published letter to Mr. Strahan he "embalmed his friend David" (Hume) because he told the public how "Hume amused himself on his deathbed with Lucian and whist," and because he even had the impudence to write of Hume: "I have always considered him both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of perfectly wise and virtuous man, as, perhaps, the nature of human frailty will permit." The Bishop cries out angrily: "Is it right in you, sir, to hold up to our view as 'perfectly wise

and virtuous' the character and conduct of one who seems to have been possessed with an incurable antipathy to all that is called religion; and who strained every nerve to explode, suppress, and extirpate the spirit of it among men, that its very name, if he could effect it, might no more be had in remembrance?" (Loc. cit., p. 8.) "But let not the lovers of truth be discouraged. Atheism cannot be of long continuance" (p. 17). Adam Smith "had the atrocious wickedness to propagate atheism through the land . . . Upon the whole, Doctor, your meaning is good; but I think you will not succeed this time. You would persuade us, by the example of David Hume, Esq., that atheism is the only cordial for low spirits, and the proper antidote against the fear of death . . . You may smile over Babylon in ruins and congratulate the hardened Pharaoh on his overthrow in the Red Sea." (Loc. cit., pp. 21–22.) One orthodox individual among A. Smith's college visitors writes after his death: "Smith's well-placed affection for Hume . . . hindered him from being a Christian. When he met with honest men whom he liked . . . he would believe almost anything they said. Had he been a friend of the worthy ingenious Horrox he would have believed that the moon sometimes disappeared in a clear sky without the interposition of a cloud . . . He approached to republicanism in his political principles." (*The Bee*, by James Anderson, 18 vols., Edinburgh, 1791–1793, Vol. 3, pp. 166, 165.) Parson Thomas Chalmers suspects Adam Smith of having invented the category of "unproductive laborers" specifically out of malice against the Protestant parsons, in spite of their blessed work in the vineyard of the Lord.

Religion and the Monetary System

The monetary system is essentially a Catholic institution, the credit system essentially Protestant. "The Scotch hate gold." In the form of paper, the monetary existence of commodities is only a social existence. It is *faith* that brings salvation. Faith in money value as the immanent spirit of commodities, faith in the mode of production and its predestined order, faith in the individual agents of production as mere personifications of self-converting capital. But the credit system does not emancipate itself from the basis of the monetary system any more than Protestantism has emancipated itself from the foundations of Catholicism.

Notes

1. *K. M.:* As in his youth St. Jerome had to wrestle with the bodily flesh, as is shown by his struggle in the desert with the attractive women of his imagination, so had he to do the same in his old age with the spiritual flesh. "I thought," he says for example, "I was in spirit before the Judge of the Universe." "Who art thou?" asked a voice. "I am a Christian." "Thou liest," thundered the Judge; "thou art only a Ciceronian."

2. *K. M.:* William Cobbett, *A History of the Protestant Reformation, in England and Ireland* (London, 1824), par. 471.

3. *K. M.:* Mr. Rogers, although formerly professor of political economy in the University of Oxford, the ancestral seat of Protestant orthodoxy, emphasizes in his *History of Agriculture* [Oxford, 1866] the pauperization of the masses by the Reformation.

ENGELS

THE PEASANT WAR IN GERMANY (CHAPTER 2) (1850)

The grouping of the then numerous and variegated Estates into bigger entities was made virtually impossible by decentralization, local and provincial independence, the industrial and commercial isolation of the provinces from each other, and poor communications. It developed only with the general spread of revolutionary, politico-religious ideas during the Reformation. The various Estates that either embraced or opposed those ideas, concentrated the nation, painfully and only approximately, into three large camps—the reactionary or Catholic camp, the Lutheran bourgeois reformist camp, and the revolutionary camp. And should we discover little logic in this great division of the nation and find partly the same elements in the first two camps, this is explained by the dissolution of most of the official Estates that came down from the Middle Ages, and by the decentralization, which, for the moment, gave these Estates in different localities opposing orientations. In recent years we have so often encountered similar facts in Germany that this apparent jumble of Estates and classes under the much more complicated conditions of the sixteenth century can scarcely surprise us.

In spite of the latest experiences, the German ideology still sees nothing except violent theological bickering in the struggles that ended the Middle Ages. If only the people of that time, say our home-bred historians and sages, had come to an understanding concerning heavenly things, there would have been no ground whatever to quarrel over earthly affairs. These ideologists are gullible enough to accept unquestioningly all the illusions that an epoch makes about itself or that ideologists of some epoch make about that epoch. People of this kind, see, for instance, in the Revolution of 1789 nothing but a somewhat heated

debate on the advantages of a constitutional monarchy over absolutism, in the July Revolution a practical controversy on the untenability of right "by the grace of God," and in the February Revolution an attempt to answer the question: republic or monarchy?, etc. They have hardly any idea to this day of the *class struggles* which were fought out in these upheavals and of which the political slogan on the banner is every time a bare expression, although notice of them is audible enough not only from abroad, but also in the roar and rumble of many thousands of home proletarians.

Even the so-called religious wars of the sixteenth century involved primarily positive material class interests; those were class wars, too, just as the later internal collisions in England and France were. Although the class struggles of that day were carried on under religious shibboleths, and though the interests, requirements, and demands of the various classes were concealed behind a religious screen, this changed nothing in the matter and is easily explained by the conditions of the time.

The Middle Ages had developed altogether from the raw. They wiped the old civilization, the old philosophy, politics and jurisprudence off the slate, to begin anew in everything. The only thing they kept from the old shattered world was Christianity and a number of half-ruined towns divested of all their civilization. As a consequence, just as in every primitive stage of development, the clergy obtained a monopoly on intellectual education, and education itself became essentially theological. In the hands of the clergy politics and jurisprudence, much like all other sciences, remained mere branches of theology, and were treated according to the principles prevailing in the latter. Church dogmas were at the same time political axioms, and Bible quotations had the force of law in any court. Even as a special estate of jurists was taking shape, jurisprudence long remained under the tutelage of theology. And this supremacy of theology in the entire realm of intellectual activity was at the same time an inevitable consequence of the place held by the Church as the most general synthesis and sanction of the existing feudal domination.

It is clear that under the circumstances, all the generally voiced attacks against feudalism were above all attacks against the Church, and all social and political, revolutionary doctrines were necessarily at the same time and mainly theological heresies. The existing social conditions had to be stripped of their halo of sanctity before they could be attacked.

Revolutionary opposition to feudalism lasted throughout the Middle Ages. It took the shape of mysticism, open heresy, or armed insurrection, all depending on the conditions of the time. As for mysticism, it is well known how much sixteenth-century reformers depended on it. Münzer himself was largely indebted to it. The heresies gave expression partly to the reaction of the par-

triarchal Alpine shepherds against the feudalism advancing upon them (Waldenses), partly to the opposition to feudalism of the towns that had outgrown it (the Albigenses, Arnold of Brescia, etc.), and partly to direct peasant insurrections (John Ball, the Hungarian teacher in Picardy, etc.). We can here leave aside the patriarchal heresy of the Waldenses, as well as the Swiss insurrection, for it was in form and content a reactionary, purely local attempt at stemming the tide of history. In the other two forms of mediaeval heresy we see, as early as the twelfth century, the precursors of the great antithesis between the burgher and peasant-plebeian oppositions, which caused the failure of the Peasant War. This antithesis is evident all through the later Middle Ages.

The town heresy—and that was the actual official heresy of the Middle Ages—was directed primarily against the clergy, whose wealth and political importance it attacked. Just as the present-day bourgeoisie demands a "*gouvernement à bon marché*" (cheap government), the mediaeval burghers chiefly demanded an "*église à bon marché*" (cheap church). Reactionary in form, like any heresy that sees only degeneration in the further development of church and dogma, the burgher heresy demanded the revival of the simple Early Christian Church constitution and abolition of exclusive priesthood. This cheap arrangement would have eliminated monks, prelates, and the Roman court, in short, everything in the Church that was expensive. The towns, republics themselves, albeit under the protection of monarchs, first enunciated in general terms through their attacks upon the Papacy that a republic was the normal form of bourgeois rule. Their hostility to a number of dogmas and church laws is explained partly by what has already been said and partly by the conditions in which they lived. Their bitter opposition to celibacy, for instance, has never been better explained than by Boccaccio. Arnold of Brescia in Italy and Germany, the Albigenses in Southern France, John Wycliffe in England, Huss and the Calixtines in Bohemia, were the principal representatives of this trend. The towns were already a recognized Estate everywhere, and were sufficiently capable of fighting secular feudalism using their privileges, either by force of arms or in the Estate assemblies, and that explains quite simply why the opposition to feudalism appeared only as an opposition to *clerical* feudalism.

We also find, in Southern France as well as in England and Bohemia, that most of the lesser nobility joined the towns in their struggle against the clergy, and in their heresies—a phenomenon explained by the dependence of the lesser nobility upon the towns, and by their community of interests as opposed to the princes and prelates. We shall see the same thing in the Peasant War.

The heresy that directly expressed the peasant and plebeian demands, and almost invariably accompanied an insurrection, was of a totally different

nature. Though it shared all the demands of burgher heresy with regard to the clergy, the Papacy, and revival of the early Christian Church constitution, it also went infinitely further. It demanded the restoration of early Christian equality among members of the community and the recognition of this equality as a prescript for the burgher world as well. From "equality of the children of God" it inferred civil equality, and partly even equality of property. Equality of nobleman and peasant, of patrician, privileged burgher and plebeian, abolition of the *corvée*, ground-rents, taxes, privileges, and at least the most crying differences in property—those were demands advanced with more or less determination as natural implications of the early Christian doctrine. At the time when feudalism was at its zenith there was little to choose between this peasant-plebeian heresy, among the Albigenses, for example, and the burgher opposition, but in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it developed into a clearly defined party opinion and usually took an independent stand alongside the heresy of the burghers. That was the case with John Ball, preacher of Wat Tyler's Rebellion in England, alongside the Wycliffe movement, and with the Taborites alongside the Calixtines in Bohemia. The Taborites even showed a republican trend under a theocratic cloak, a view further developed by representatives of the plebeians in Germany in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

The fanaticism of mystically minded sects, of the Flagellants and Lollards, etc., which continued the revolutionary tradition in times of suppression, rallied round this form of heresy.

At that time the plebeians were the only class that stood outside the existing official society. They stood outside both the feudal and the burgher associations. They had neither privileges nor property; they did not even have the kind of property the peasant or petty burgher had, weighed down as it was with burdensome taxes. They were unpropertied and rightless in every respect; their living conditions never even brought them into direct contact with the existing institutions, which ignored them completely. They were a living symptom of the decay of the feudal and guild-burgher society and at the same time the first precursors of the modern bourgeois society.

This explains why the plebeian opposition even then could not confine itself to fighting only feudalism and the privileged burghers; why, in fantasy at least, it reached beyond the then scarcely dawning modern bourgeois society; why, an absolutely propertyless group, it questioned the institutions, views and conceptions common to all societies based on class antagonisms. In this respect, the chiliastic dream-visions of early Christianity offered a very convenient starting-point. On the other hand, this sally beyond both the present and even the future could be nothing but violent and fantastic, and of neces-

sity fell back into the narrow limits set by the contemporary situation. The attack on private property, the demand for common ownership was bound to resolve into a primitive organization of charity; vague Christian equality could at best resolve into civic "equality before the law"; elimination of all authorities finally culminates in the establishment of republican governments elected by the people. The anticipation of communism by fantasy became in reality an anticipation of modern bourgeois conditions.

This violent anticipation of coming historical developments, easily explained by the living conditions of the plebeians, is first observed in *Germany,* in *Thomas Münzer* and his party. The Taborites had a kind of chiliastic common ownership, but that was a purely military measure. Only in the teachings of Münzer did these communist strains express the aspirations of a real fraction of society. He was the first to formulate them with a certain definiteness, and since him they have been observed in every great popular upheaval, until they gradually merged with the modern proletarian movement just as the struggles of free peasants in the Middle Ages against feudal domination which was ensnaring them more and more merged with the struggles of serfs and bondsmen for complete abolition of the feudal system.

While the first of the three large camps, the *conservative Catholic* camp, embraced all the elements interested in maintaining the existing conditions, i.e., the imperial authorities, the ecclesiastical and a section of the lay princes, the richer nobility, the prelates and the city patricians, the camp of *burgher-like moderate Lutheran* reforms attracted all the propertied elements of the opposition, the bulk of the lesser nobility, the burghers, and even a portion of the lay princes who hoped to enrich themselves through confiscation of church estates and wanted to seize the opportunity of gaining greater independence from the Empire. As to the peasants and plebeians, they united in a *revolutionary* party whose demands and doctrines were most clearly expressed by Münzer.

Luther and Münzer each fully represented his party by his doctrine as well as by his character and actions.

From 1517 to 1525 *Luther* underwent quite the same changes as the present-day German constitutionalists did between 1846 and 1849, and which are undergone by every bourgeois party which, placed for a while at the head of the movement, is outflanked by the plebeian-proletarian party standing behind it.

When in 1517 Luther first opposed the dogmas and statutes of the Catholic Church, his opposition by no means possessed a definite character. While it did not overstep the demands of the earlier burgher heresy, it did not, and could not, rule out any trend which went further. At that early stage all the oppositional elements had to be united, the most aggressive revolutionary

energy displayed, and the sum of the existing heresies against the Catholic orthodoxy had to find a protagonist. In much the same way our liberal bourgeoisie of 1847 was still revolutionary, called itself socialist and communist, and clamored for the emancipation of the working class. Luther's sturdy peasant nature asserted itself in the stormiest fashion in that first period of his activities.

"If the raging madness" (of the Roman churchmen) "were to continue, it seems to me no better counsel and remedy could be found against it than that kings and princes apply force, arm themselves, attack those evil people who have poisoned the entire world, and put an end to this game once for all, *with arms, not with words.* Since we punish thieves with the halter, murderers with the sword, and heretics with fire, why do we not turn on all those evil teachers of perdition, those popes, cardinals and bishops, and the entire swarm of the Roman Sodom *with arms in hand, and wash our hands in their blood?*"

But this revolutionary ardor was short-lived. Luther's lightning struck home. The entire German people was set in motion. On the one hand, peasants and plebeians saw the signal to revolt in his appeals against the clergy and in his preaching of Christian freedom; and on the other, he was joined by the moderate burghers and a large section of the lesser nobility, and even princes were drawn into the current. The former believed the day had come to wreak vengeance upon all their oppressors, the latter only wished to break the power of the clergy, the dependence upon Rome and the Catholic hierarchy, and to enrich themselves on the confiscation of church property. The parties defined their positions, and each found its spokesmen. Luther had to choose between them. He, the protégé of the Elector of Saxony, the revered professor of Wittenberg who had become powerful and famous overnight, the great man with his coterie of servile creatures and flatterers, did not hesitate a single moment. He dropped the popular elements of the movement, and took the side of the burghers, the nobility, and the princes. His appeals for a war of extermination against Rome were heard no more. Luther now preached *peaceful progress* and *passive resistance* (cf., for example, *The Address to the German Nobility,* 1520, etc.). Invited by Hutten to visit him and Sickingen at Ebernburg, the seat of the nobility's conspiracy against clergy and princes, Luther replied:

"I do not wish the Gospel *defended by force and bloodshed.* The world was conquered by the word, the Church is maintained by the Word, by the Word also the Church will be revived, and Antichrist, who gained his own without violence, will fall without violence."

From this turn, or, to be more exact, from this more exact definition of Luther's policy, sprang that bartering and haggling over institutions and dogmas to be retained or reformed, that disgusting diplomatizing, conciliating,

intriguing and compromising, which resulted in the Augsburg Confession, the finally negotiated articles of a reformed burgher church. It was quite the same kind of petty bargaining that was recently repeated in political form *ad nauseam* at the German national assemblies, conciliatory gatherings, chambers of revision, and Erfurt parliaments. The philistine nature of the official Reformation was most markedly evident at these negotiations.

There were good reasons for Luther, henceforth the recognized representative of the burgher reform, to preach progress within the pale of the law. The bulk of towns espoused the cause of moderate reform, the petty nobility became more and more devoted to it, and a section of the princes struck in, while another vacillated. Success was as good as won, at least in a large part of Germany. The remaining regions could not in the long run withstand the pressure of moderate opposition in the event of continued peaceful development. Any violent upheaval, meanwhile, was bound to bring the moderate party into conflict with the extremist plebeian and peasant party, to alienate the princes, the nobility, and certain towns from the movement, leaving the alternative of either the burgher party being outflanked by the peasants and plebeians, or the entire movement being crushed by a Catholic restoration. And there have been examples enough lately of how bourgeois parties seek to steer their way by means of progress within the pale of the law between the Scylla of revolution and the Charybdis of restoration, as soon as they have gained the slightest victory.

Under the general social and political conditions prevailing in that day the results of every change were necessarily advantageous to the princes, and inevitably increased their power. Thus the more sharply the burgher reform broke away from the plebeian and peasant elements the more completely it was bound to fall under the control of the reformed princes. Luther himself became more and more their vassal, and the people well knew what they were doing when they accused him of having become, like the others, a flunkey of the princes, and when they stoned him at Orlamünde.

When the Peasant War broke out Luther strove to adopt a mediatory attitude in regions where the nobility and the princes were mostly Catholic. He resolutely attacked the governments. He said they were to blame for the rebellion because of their oppression; it was not the peasants, but God himself, who rose against them. Yet, on the other hand, he said, the revolt was ungodly, and contrary to the Gospel. In conclusion he called upon both parties to yield and reach a friendly settlement.

But in spite of these well-meaning mediatory offers, the revolt spread swiftly and even involved Protestant regions dominated by Lutheran princes, lords, and towns, rapidly outgrowing the "circumspect" burgher reform. The

most determined group of the insurgents under Münzer made its headquarters in Luther's immediate proximity in Thuringia. A few more successes, and the whole of Germany would be in flames, Luther surrounded and perhaps piked as a traitor, and the burgher reform swept away by the tide of a peasant-plebeian revolution. There was no more time for circumspection. All the old animosities were forgotten in the face of the revolution. Compared with the hordes of peasants, the servants of the Roman Sodom were innocent lambs, sweet-tempered children of God. Burgher and prince, noble and clergyman, Luther and the Pope, all joined hands "against the murderous and plundering peasant hordes."

"They must be knocked to pieces, strangled and stabbed, covertly and overtly, by everyone who can, just as one must kill a *mad dog*!" Luther cried. "Therefore, dear sirs, help here, save there, stab, knock, strangle them everyone who can, and should you lose your life, bless you, no better death can you ever attain."

Only there should be no false mercy for the peasant. Whoever hath pity on those whom God pities not, whom He wishes punished and destroyed, belongs among the rebels himself. Later the peasants would themselves learn to thank God when they had to give up one cow in order to enjoy the other in peace, and the princes would learn through the revolution the spirit of the mob that must be ruled by force only. "The wise man says: *cibum, onus et virgam asino* ["food, pack, and lash for the ass"]. The peasants must have nothing but chaff. They do not hearken to the Word, and are foolish, so they must hearken to the rod and the gun, and that serves them right. We must pray for them that they obey. Where they do not there should not be much mercy. *Let the guns roar among them,* or else they will make things a thousand times worse."

That was exactly what our late socialist and philanthropic bourgeoisie said when the proletariat claimed its share in the fruits of victory after the March events.

Luther had put a powerful weapon into the hands of the plebeian movement by translating the Bible. Through the Bible he contrasted the feudalized Christianity of his day with the unassuming Christianity of the first century, and the decaying feudal society with a picture of a society that knew nothing of the complex and artificial feudal hierarchy. The peasants had made extensive use of this instrument against the princes, the nobility, and the clergy. Now Luther turned it against them, extracting from the Bible a real hymn to the God-ordained authorities such as no bootlicker of absolute monarchy had ever been able to achieve. Princedom by the grace of God, resigned obedience, even serfdom, were sanctioned with the aid of the Bible. Not the peasant revolt

alone, but Luther's own mutiny against ecclesiastical and secular authority was thereby disavowed; and not only the popular movement, but the burgher movement as well, were betrayed to the princes.

Need we name the bourgeois who recently also gave us examples of such a disavowal of their own past?

Let us now compare the plebeian revolutionary *Münzer,* with Luther, the burgher reformist.

Thomas Münzer was born at *Stolberg,* in the Harz, in 1498. His father is said to have died on the scaffold, a victim of the tyranny of the Count of Stolberg. At the age of fifteen Münzer organized a secret union at a Halle school against the Archbishop of Magdeburg and the Roman Church in general. His learning in the theology of his time brought him an early doctor's degree and the position of chaplain in a Halle nunnery. Here he treated the church dogmas and rites with the greatest contempt. At mass he omitted the words of the transubstantiation, and ate, as Luther said, the almighty gods unconsecrated. Mediaeval mystics, and particularly the chiliastic works of Joachim the Calabrese, were the main subject of his studies. What with the Reformation and the general unrest of his time, the millennium and the day of judgment over the degenerated church and corrupted world propounded and described by that mystic, seemed to Münzer imminently close. He preached in the neighborhood with great success. In 1520 he went to Zwickau as the first evangelical preacher. There he found one of those fanatical chiliastic sects that continued their existence on the quiet in many localities, and whose momentary dejection and retirement concealed the incessantly growing opposition of the lowest strata of society to the prevailing conditions, and who, with the growing unrest, now came into the open ever more boldly and persistently. It was the sect of the Anabaptists headed by Niklas *Storch.* They preached the approach of the day of judgment and of the millennium; they had "visions, transports, and the spirit of prophecy." They soon came into conflict with the Council of Zwickau. Münzer defended them, though he never joined them unconditionally and would have rather brought them under his own influence. The Council took drastic measures against them; they had to leave the town, and Münzer with them. This was at the close of 1521.

He went to Prague and sought to gain a foothold by joining the remnants of the Hussite movement. But his proclamation only had the effect of compelling him to flee from Bohemia as well. In 1522 he became preacher at Allstedt in Thuringia. Here he started with reforming the cult. Even before Luther dared to go so far, he entirely discarded the Latin language and ordered the entire Bible, and not only the prescribed Sunday Gospels and epistles, to be read to the people. At the same time, he organized propaganda in his locality. People

flocked to him from all directions, and Allstedt soon became the center of the popular anti-priest movement for the whole of Thuringia.

Münzer was as yet a theologian before everything else. He still directed his attacks almost exclusively against the priests. He did not, however, preach quiet debate and peaceful progress, as Luther was already then doing, but continued Luther's earlier violent sermons, calling upon the princes of Saxony and the people to rise in arms against the Roman priests.

"Does not Christ say, 'I came not to bring peace, but the sword'? What must you (the princes of Saxony) do with that sword? Only one thing if you wish to be the servants of God, and that is to drive out and destroy the evil ones who stand in the way of the Gospel. Christ ordered very earnestly (Luke, 19, 27): 'Bring hither mine enemies and slay them before me.' Do not give us any empty phrases that the power of God will do without the aid of your sword, since then it would rust in its sheath. . . . Those who stand in the way of God's revelation must be destroyed mercilessly, as Hezekiah, Cyrus, Josiah, Daniel and Elias destroyed the priests of Baal, else the Christian Church will never come back to its source. We must uproot the weeds in God's vineyard at harvest time. . . . God said in the Fifth Book of Moses, 7: 'Ye shall not show mercy unto the idolators, but ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images and burn them with fire that I shall not be wroth at you.'"

But these appeals to the princes were of no avail, whereas revolutionary sentiments among the people grew day by day. Münzer, whose ideas became ever more sharply defined and bolder, now broke resolutely away from the burgher Reformation, and henceforth became an outright political agitator.

His philosophico-theological doctrine attacked all the main points not only of Catholicism, but of Christianity generally. Under the cloak of Christian forms he preached a kind of pantheism, which curiously resembles modern speculative contemplation and at times even approaches atheism. He repudiated the Bible both as the only and the infallible revelation. The real and living revelation, he said, was reason, a revelation which has always existed among all peoples at all times. To hold up the Bible against reason, he maintained, was to kill the spirit by the letter, for the Holy Spirit of which the Bible speaks is not something that exists outside; the Holy Spirit is our reason. Faith is nothing else but reason come to life in man, and pagans could therefore also have faith. Through this faith, through reason come to life, man became godlike and blessed. Heaven is, therefore, not a thing of another world, and is to be sought in this life and it is the task of believers to establish this Heaven, the kingdom of God, here on earth. Just as there is no Heaven in the beyond, there is also no Hell and no damnation. Similarly, there is no devil but man's evil lusts and greed. Christ was a man as we are, a prophet and a teacher, and

his Eucharist is a mere commemoration meal wherein bread and wine are consumed without any mystic garnishing.

Münzer preached these doctrines mostly cloaked in the same Christian phraseology under which the new philosophy had to hide for some time. But the arch heretical fundamental idea is easily discerned in all his writings, and he obviously took the biblical cloak much less in earnest than many a disciple of Hegel in modern times. And yet three hundred years separate Münzer from modern philosophy.

Münzer's political doctrine followed his revolutionary religious conceptions very closely, and just as his theology overstepped the current conceptions of his time, so his political doctrine went beyond the directly prevailing social and political conditions. Just as Münzer's religious philosophy approached atheism, so his political program approached communism, and even on the eve of the February Revolution, there was more than one modern communist sect that had not such a well-stocked theoretical arsenal as was "Münzer's" in the sixteenth century. This program, less a compilation of the demands of the plebeians of that day than a visionary anticipation of the conditions for the emancipation of the proletarian element that had scarcely begun to develop among the plebeians—this program demanded the immediate establishment of the kingdom of God, of the prophesied millennium, by restoring the Church to its original condition and abolishing all the institutions that conflicted with this allegedly early-Christian, but, in fact, very novel church. By the kingdom of God Münzer understood a society in which there would be no class differences or private property and no state authority independent of or foreign to the members of society. All the existing authorities, insofar as they refused to submit and join the revolution, were to be overthrown, all work and all property shared in common, and complete equality introduced. A union was to be established to implement all this, not only throughout Germany, but throughout Christendom. Princes and lords were to be invited to join, and should they refuse, the union was to take up arms and overthrow or kill them at the first opportunity.

Münzer set to work at once to organize the union. His sermons became still more militant and revolutionary. He thundered forth against the princes, the nobility, and the patricians with a passion that equaled the fervor of his attacks upon the clergy. He depicted the prevailing oppression in fiery colors, and countered it with his dream-vision of the millennium of social republican equality. He published one revolutionary pamphlet after another and sent emissaries in all directions, while personally organizing the union in Allstedt and its vicinity.

The first fruit of this propaganda was the destruction of the Marienkapelle at Mellerbach near Allstedt, according to the command of the Bible (Deut. 7:6): "Ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images and burn their

graven images with fire." The princes of Saxony came in person to Allstedt to quell the unrest, and summoned Münzer to the castle. There he delivered a sermon the like of which they had not heard from Luther, "that easy-living flesh of Wittenberg," as Münzer called him. Münzer maintained that ungodly rulers, especially priests and monks, who treated the Gospel as heresy, should be killed, and referred to the New Testament for confirmation. The ungodly had no right to live save by the mercy of God's elect. If the princes would not exterminate the ungodly, God would take their sword from them, *because the entire community had the power of the sword.* The princes and lords are the prime movers of usury, thieving, and robbery; they take all creatures into their private possession—the fish in the water, the birds in the air, and the plants in the soil—and still preach to the poor the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," while they themselves take everything they find, rob and oppress the peasant and the artisan; but when one of the latter commits the slightest transgression, he has to hang, and Dr. Lügner says to all this: Amen.

"The masters themselves are to blame that the poor man becomes their enemy. If they do not remove the causes of the upheaval, how can things go well in the long run? Oh, dear sirs, how the Lord will smite these old pots with an iron rod! If I say so, I shall stir up the people. So be it!" (Cf. Zimmermann's *Bauernkrieg,* II, p. 75.)

Münzer had the sermon printed. His Allstedt printer was punished by Duke Johann of Saxony with banishment, while Münzer's writings were to be henceforth censored by the ducal government in Weimar. But he paid no heed to this order. He lost no time in publishing a highly seditious paper in the imperial city of Mühlhausen, in which he called on the people "to widen the hole so that all the world may see and understand who our great personages are that have blasphemously turned our Lord into a painted manikin," and which ended with the following words:

"All the world must suffer a big jolt. There will be such a game that the ungodly will be thrown off their seats, and the downtrodden will rise."

Thomas Münzer, "the man with the hammer," wrote the following motto on the title page:

"Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant. A wall of iron against the kings, princes, priests, and against the people of the land hath been erected. Let them fight, for victory will wondrously lead to the perdition of the strong and godless tyrants."

Münzer's breach with Luther and his party had long been an accomplished fact. Luther had to accept some of the church reforms introduced by Münzer

without consulting him. He watched Münzer's activities with a moderate reformer's nettled mistrust of a more energetic farther-aiming party. As early as the spring of 1524, in a letter to Melanchthon, that model of a hectic stay-at-home philistine, Münzer wrote that he and Luther did not understand the movement at all. He said they sought to choke it by the letter of the Bible, and that their doctrine was worm-eaten.

"Dear brethren," he wrote, "cease your procrastinations and vacillations. It is time, summer is knocking at the door. Do not keep friendship with the ungodly who hinder the Word from working its full force. Do not flatter your princes, or you may perish with them. Ye tender bookish scholars, be not wroth, for I cannot do otherwise."

Luther challenged Münzer more than once to an open debate. The latter, however, always ready to take up the battle before the people, had not the least desire to let himself in for a theological squabble before the partial public of Wittenberg University. He did not wish "to bring the testimony of the Spirit exclusively before the high school of learning." If Luther were sincere he should use his influence to stop the chicaneries against his, Münzer's printer, and lift the censorhip so that their controversy might be freely fought out in the press.

But now, when Münzer's above-mentioned revolutionary brochure appeared, Luther openly denounced him. In his *Letter to the Princes of Saxony against the Rebellious Spirit,* he declared Münzer to be an instrument of Satan, and demanded of the princes to intervene and drive the instigators of the upheaval out of the country, since they did not confine themselves to preaching their evil doctrine, but incited to insurrection, to violent action against the authorities.

On August 1, Münzer was compelled to appear before the princes in the castle of Weimar on the charge of incitement to mutiny. Highly compromising facts were brought against him; they were on the scent of his secret union; his hand was detected in the societies of the miners and the peasants. He was threatened with banishment. No sooner had he returned to Allstedt than he learned that Duke Georg of Saxony demanded his extradition. Union letters in his handwriting had been intercepted, in which he called Georg's subjects to armed resistance against the enemies of the Gospel. The Council would have extradited him had he not left the town.

In the meantime, the growing unrest among the peasants and plebeians had made Münzer's propaganda work incomparably easier. In the Anabaptists he found invaluable agents for that purpose. This sect, which had no definite dogmas, held together only by its common opposition to all ruling classes and by the common symbol of the second baptism, ascetic in their mode of living,

untiring, fanatical, and intrepid in carrying on propaganda, had grouped itself more and more closely around Münzer. Made homeless by persecutions, its members wandered all over Germany and carried everywhere word of the new teaching, in which Münzer had made their own demands and wishes clear to them. Countless Anabaptists were put on the rack, burned, or otherwise executed, but the courage and endurance of these emissaries were unshakeable, and the success of their activities amidst the rapidly growing unrest of the people was enormous. Thus, on his flight from Thuringia, Münzer found the ground prepared wherever he turned.

Near Nuremberg, where Münzer first went, a peasant revolt had been nipped in the bud a month before. Münzer conducted his propaganda clandestinely; people soon appeared who defended his most audacious theological propositions on the non-obligatory nature of the Bible and the meaninglessness of the sacraments, who declared Christ a mere man, and the power of the secular authorities ungodly. "There is Satan stalking, the Spirit of Allstedt!" Luther exclaimed. In Nuremberg Münzer printed his reply to Luther. He accused him of flattering the princes and supporting the reactionary party through his insipid moderation. But the people would free themselves nonetheless, he wrote, and it would go with Dr. Luther as with a captive fox. The Council ordered the confiscation of the paper, and Münzer had to leave Nuremberg.

Now he went via Swabia to Alsace, then to Switzerland, and then back to the Upper Black Forest, where an insurrection had broken out several months before, largely precipitated by his Anabaptist emissaries. This propaganda tour of Münzer's unquestionably and substantially contributed to the establishment of the people's party, to a clear formulation of its demands, and to the final general outbreak of the insurrection in April 1525. This trip particularly brought out the dual effect of Münzer's activities—on the one hand, on the people, whom he addressed in the only language they could then understand, that of religious prophecy; and, on the other hand, on the initiated, to whom he could disclose his ultimate aims. Even before his journey he had assembled in Thuringia a group of resolute men from among the people and the lower clergy, whom he had put at the head of his secret society. Now he became the soul of the entire revolutionary movement in South-Western Germany, organized ties between Saxony and Thuringia through Franconia and Swabia as far as Alsace and the Swiss border, and counted among his disciples and the heads of the union South-German agitators such as Hubmaier of Waldshut, Conrad Grebel of Zürich, Franz Rabmann of Griessen, Schappeler of Memmingen, Jakob Wehe of Leipheim, and Dr. Mantel in Stuttgart, who were mostly revolutionary priests. He himself stayed mostly in Griessen on the

Schaffhausen border, journeying from there through Hegau, Klettgau, etc. The bloody persecutions undertaken everywhere by the alarmed princes and lords against this new plebeian heresy, contributed not a little to fan the spirit of rebellion and consolidate the ranks of the society. In this way Münzer conducted his agitation for about five months in Upper Germany, and returned to Thuringia when the outbreak of the conspiracy was near at hand, because he wished to lead the movement personally. There we shall find him later.

We shall see how truly the character and behavior of the two party leaders reflected the attitude of their respective parties, how Luther's indecision and fear of the movement, which was assuming serious proportions, and his cowardly servility to the princes, fully corresponded to the hesitant and ambiguous policy of the burghers, and how Münzer's revolutionary energy and resolution was reproduced among the most advanced section of the plebeians and peasants. The only difference was that while Luther confined himself to expressing the conceptions and wishes of the majority of his class and thereby won an extremely cheap popularity among it, Münzer, on the contrary, went far beyond the immediate ideas and demands of the plebeians and peasants, and first organized a party of the élite of the then existing revolutionary elements, which, inasmuch as it shared his ideas and energy, was never more than a small minority of the insurgent masses.

ON THE HISTORY OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY (1895)

I

The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement. Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people: it first appeared as the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves, of poor people deprived of all rights, of peoples subjugated or dispersed by Rome. Both Christianity and the workers' socialism preach forthcoming salvation from bondage and misery; Christianity places this salvation in a life beyond, after death, in heaven; socialism places it in this world, in a transformation of society. Both are persecuted and baited, their adherents are despised and made the objects of exclusive laws, the former as enemies of the human race, the latter as enemies of the state, enemies of religion, the family, social order. And in spite of all persecution, nay, even spurred on by it, they forge victoriously, irresistibly ahead. Three hundred years after its appearance Christianity was the recognized state religion

in the Roman World Empire, and in barely sixty years socialism has won itself a position which makes its victory absolutely certain.

If, therefore, Prof. Anton Menger wonders in his *Right to the Full Product of Labour* why, with the enormous concentration of landownership under the Roman emperors and the boundless sufferings of the working class of the time, which was composed almost exclusively of slaves, "socialism did not follow the overthrow of the Roman Empire in the West," it is because he cannot see that this "socialism" did in fact, as far as it was possible at the time, exist and even became dominant—in Christianity. Only this Christianity, as was bound to be the case in the historic conditions, did not want to accomplish the social transformation in this world, but beyond it, in heaven, in eternal life after death, in the impending "millennium."

The parallel between the two historic phenomena forces itself upon our attention as early as the Middle Ages in the first risings of the oppressed peasants and particularly of the town plebeians. These risings, like all mass movements of the Middle Ages, were bound to wear the mask of religion and appeared as the restoration of early Christianity from spreading degeneration*; but behind the religious exaltaton there was every time a very tangible worldly interest. This appeared most splendidly in the organization of the Bohemian Taborites under Jan Zika, of glorious memory; but this trait pervades the whole of the Middle Ages until it gradually fades away after the German Peasant War to revive again with the workingmen Communists after 1830. The French revolutionary Communists, as also in particular Weitling and his supporters, referred to early Christianity long before Renan's words: "If I wanted to give you an idea of the early Christian communities I would tell you to look at a local section of the International Working Men's Association."

This French man of letters, who by mutilating German criticism of the Bible in a manner unprecedented even in modern journalism composed the novel on church history *Origines du Christianisme*, did not know himself how much truth there was in the words just quoted. I should like to see the old "International" who can read, for example, the so-called Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians without old wounds re-opening, at least in one respect. The whole epistle, from chapter eight onwards, echoes the eternal, and oh! so well-known complaint: *les cotisations ne rentrent pas*—contributions are not coming in! How many of the most zealous propagandists of the sixties would sympathizingly squeeze the hand of the author of that epistle, whoever he may be, and whisper: "So it was like that with you too!" We too—Corinthians were legion in our Association—can sing a song about contributions not coming in but tantalizing us as they floated elusively before our eyes. They were the famous "millions of the International"!

One of our best sources on the first Christians is Lucian of Samosata, the Voltaire of classic antiquity, who was equally sceptic towards every kind of religious superstition and therefore had neither pagan-religious nor political grounds to treat the Christians otherwise than as some other kind of religious community. On the contrary, he mocked them all for their superstition, those who prayed to Jupiter no less than those who prayed to Christ; from his shallow rationalistic point of view one sort of superstition was as stupid as the other. This in any case impartial witness relates among other things the life-story of a certain adventurous Peregrinus, Proteus by name, from Parium in Hellespontus. When a youth, this Peregrinus made his *début* in Armenia by committing fornication. He was caught in the act and lynched according to the custom of the country. He was fortunate enough to escape and after strangling his father in Parium he had to flee.

"And so it happened"—I quote from Schott's translation—"that he also came to hear of the astonishing learning of the Christians, with whose priests and scribes he had cultivated intercourse in Palestine. He made such progress in a short time that his teachers were like children compared with him. He became a prophet, an elder, a master of the synagogue, in a word, all in everything. He interpreted their writings and himself wrote a great number of works, so that finally people saw in him a superior being, let him lay down laws for them and made him their overseer (bishop). . . . On that ground (i.e., because he was a Christian) Proteus was at length arrested by the authorities and thrown into prison. . . . As he thus lay in chains, the Christians, who saw in his capture a great misfortune, made all possible attempts to free him. But they did not succeed. Then they administered to him in all possible ways with the greatest solicitude. As early as daybreak one could see aged mothers, widows and young orphans crowding at the door of his prison; the most prominent among the Christians even bribed the warders and spent whole nights with him; they took their meals with them and read their holy books in his presence; briefly, the beloved Peregrinus" (he still went by that name) "was no less to them than a new Socrates. Envoys of Christian communities came to him even from towns in Asia Minor to lend him a helping hand, to console him and to testify in his favor in court. It is unbelievable how quick these people are to act whenever it is a question of their community; they immediately spare neither exertion nor expense. And thus from all sides money then poured in to Peregrinus so that his imprisonment became for him a source of great income. For the poor people persuaded themselves that they were immortal in body and in soul and that they would live for all eternity; that was why they scorned death and many of them even voluntarily sacrificed their lives. Then their most prominent lawgiver convinced them that they would all be

brothers one to another once they were converted, i.e., renounced the Greek gods, professed faith in the crucified sophist and lived according to his prescriptions. That is why they despise all material goods without distinction and own them in common—doctrines which they have accepted in good faith, without demonstration or proof. And when a skilful imposter who knows how to make clever use of circumstances comes to them he can manage to get rich in a short time and laugh up his sleeve over these simpletons. For the rest, Peregrinus was set free by him who was then prefect of Syria."

Then, after a few more adventures,

"Our worthy set forth a second time" (from Parium) "on his peregrinations, the Christians' good disposition standing him in lieu of money for his journey: they administered to his needs everywhere and never let him suffer want. He was fed for a time in this way. But then, when he violated the laws of the Christians too—I think he was caught eating of some forbidden food—they excommunicated him from their community."

What memories of youth come to my mind as I read this passage from Lucian! First of all the "prophet Albrecht" who from about 1840 literally plundered the Weitling communist communities in Switzerland for several years—a tall powerful man with a long beard who wandered on foot through Switzerland and gathered audiences for his mysterious new Gospel of world emancipation, but who, after all, seems to have been a tolerably harmless hoaxer and soon died. Then his not so harmless successor, "the doctor" George Kuhlmann from Holstein, who put to profit the time when Weitling was in prison to convert the communities of French Switzerland to *his own* Gospel, and for a time with such success that he even caught August Becker, by far the cleverest but also the biggest ne'er-do-well among them. This Kuhlmann used to deliver lectures to them which were published in Geneva in 1845 under the title *The New World, or the Kingdom of the Spirit on Earth. Proclamation.* In the introduction, written by his supporters (probably August Becker) we read:

"What was needed was a man on whose lips all our sufferings and all our longings and hopes, in a word, all that affects our time most profoundly should find expression. . . . This man, whom our time was waiting for, has come. He is the doctor George Kuhlmann from Holstein. He has come forward with the doctrine on the new world or the kingdom of the spirit in reality."

I hardly need to add that this doctrine of the new world is nothing more than the most vulgar sentimental nonsense rendered in half-biblical expressions *à la Lamennais* and declaimed with prophet-like arrogance. But this did not prevent the good Weitlingers from carrying the swindler shoulder-high as

the Asian Christians once did Peregrinus. They who were otherwise arch-democrats and extreme equalitarians to the extent of fostering ineradicable suspicion against any schoolmaster, journalist, and any man generally who was not a manual worker as being an "erudite" who was out to exploit them, let themselves be persuaded by the melodramatically arrayed Kuhlmann that in the "New World" it would be the wisest of all, *id est,* Kuhlmann, who would regulate the distribution of pleasures and that therefore, even then, in the Old World, the disciples ought to bring pleasures by the bushel to that same wisest of all while they themselves should be content with crumbs. So Peregrinus Kuhlmann lived a splendid life of pleasure at the expense of the community—as long as it lasted. It did not last very long, of course; the growing murmurs of doubters and unbelievers and the menace of persecution by the Vaudois Government put an end to the "Kingdom of the Spirit" in Lausanne—Kuhlmann disappeared.

Everybody who has known by experience the European working-class movement in its beginnings will remember dozens of similar examples. Today such extreme cases, at least in the large centers, have become impossible; but in remote districts where the movement has won new ground a small Peregrinus of this kind can still count on a temporary limited success. And just as all those who have nothing to look forward to from the official world or have come to the end of their tether with it—opponents of inoculation, supporters of abstemiousness, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists, nature-healers, free-community preachers whose communities have fallen to pieces, authors of new theories on the origin of the universe, unsuccessful or unfortunate inventors, victims of real or imaginary injustice who are termed "good-for-nothing pettifoggers" by the bureaucracy, honest fools and dishonest swindlers—all throng to the working-class parties in all countries—so it was with the first Christians. All the elements which had been set free, i.e., at a loose end, by the dissolution of the old world came one after the other into the orbit of Christianity as the only element that resisted that process of dissolution—for the very reason that it was the necessary product of that process—and that therefore persisted and grew while the other elements were but ephemeral flies. There was no fanaticism, no foolishness, no scheming that did not flock to the young Christian communities and did not at least for a time and in isolated places find attentive ears and willing believers. And like our first communist workers' associations the early Christians too took with such unprecedented gullibility to anything which suited their purpose that we are not even sure that some fragment or other of the "great number of works" that Peregrinus wrote for Christianity did not find its way into our New Testament.

II

German criticism of the Bible, so far the only scientific basis of our knowledge of the history of early Christianity, followed a double tendency.

The first tendency was that of the *Tübingen school,* in which, in the broad sense, D. F. Strauss must also be included. In critical inquiry it goes as far as a *theological* school can go. It admits that the four Gospels are not eye-witness accounts but only later adaptations of writings that have been lost; that no more than four of the Epistles attributed to the apostle Paul are authentic, etc. It strikes out of the historical narrations all miracles and contradictions, considering them as unacceptable; but from the rest it tries "to save what can be saved" and then its nature, that of a theological school, is very evident. Thus it enabled Renan, who bases himself mostly on it, to "save" still more by applying the same method and, moreover, to try to impose upon us as historically authenticated many New Testament accounts that are more than doubtful and, besides, a multitude of other legends about martyrs. In any case, all that the Tübingen school rejects as unhistorical or apocryphal can be considered as finally eliminated for science.

The other tendency has but one representative—*Bruno Bauer.* His greatest service consists not merely in having given a pitiless criticism of the Gospels and the Epistles of the apostles, but in having for the first time seriously undertaken an inquiry into not only the Jewish and Greco-Alexandrian elements but the purely Greek and Greco-Roman elements that first opened for Christianity the career of a universal religion. The legend that Christianity arose ready and complete out of Judaism and, starting from Palestine, conquered the world with its dogma already defined in the main and its morals, has been untenable since Bruno Bauer; it can continue to vegetate only in the theological faculties and with people who wish "to keep religion alive for the people" even at the expense of science. The enormous influence which the Philonic school of Alexandria and Greco-Roman vulgar philosophy—Platonic and mainly Stoic—had on Christianity, which became the state religion under Constantine, is far from having been defined in detail, but its existence has been proved and that is primarily the achievement of Bruno Bauer: he laid the foundation of the proof that Christianity was not imported from outside—from Judea—into the Romano-Greek world and imposed on it, but that, at least in its world-religion form, it is that world's own product. Bauer, of course, like all those who are fighting against deep-rooted prejudices, overreached his aim in this work. In order to define through literary sources too Philo's and particularly Seneca's influence on emerging Christianity and to show up the authors of the New Testament formally as downright plagiarists of those philosophers he

had to place the appearance of the new religion about half a century later, to reject the opposing accounts of Roman historians and take extensive liberties with historiography in general. According to him Christianity as such appears only under the Flavians, the literature of the New Testament only under Hadrian, Antonius, and Marcus Aurelius. As a result the New Testament accounts of Jesus and his disciples are deprived for Bauer of any historical background: they are diluted in legends in which the phases of interior development and the moral struggles of the first communities are transferred to more or less fictitious persons. Not Galilee and Jerusalem, but Alexandria and Rome, according to Bauer, are the birthplaces of the new religion.

If, therefore, the Tübingen school presents to us in the remains of the New Testament stories and literature that it left untouched the extreme maximum of what science today can still accept as disputable, Bruno Bauer presents to us the maximum of what can be contested. The factual truth lies between these two limits. Whether that truth can be defined with the means at our disposal today is very doubtful. New discoveries, particularly in Rome, in the Orient, and above all in Egypt, will contribute more to this than any criticism.

But we have in the New Testament a single book the time of the writing of which can be defined within a few months, which must have been written between June 67 and January or April 68; a book, consequently, which belongs to the very beginning of the Christian era and reflects with the most naive fidelity and in the corresponding idiomatic language the ideas of the beginning of that era. This book, therefore, in my opinion, is a far more important source from which to define what early Christianity really was than all the rest of the New Testament, which, in its present form, is of a far later date. This book is the so-called Revelation of John. And as this, apparently the most obscure book in the whole Bible, is moreover today, thanks to German criticism, the most comprehensible and the clearest, I shall give my readers an account of it.

One needs but to look into this book in order to be convinced of the state of great exaltation not only of the author, but also of the "surrounding medium" in which he moved. Our "Revelation" is not the only one of its kind and time. From the year 164 before our era, when the first which has reached us, the so-called Book of Daniel, was written, up to about 250 of our era, the approximate date of Commodian's *Carmen,* Renan counted no fewer than fifteen extant classical "Apocalypses," not counting subsequent imitations. (I quote Renan because his book is also the best known by non-specialists and the most accessible.) That was a time when even in Rome and Greece and still more in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt an absolutely uncritical mixture of the crassest superstitions of the most varying peoples was indiscriminately accepted and

complemented by pious deception and downright charlatanism; a time in which miracles, ecstasies, visions, apparitions, divining, gold-making, cabbala and other secret magic played a primary role. It was in that atmosphere, and, moreover, among a class of people who were more inclined than any other to listen to these supernatural fantasies, that Christianity arose. For did not the Christian gnostics in Egypt during the second century of our era engage extensively in alchemy and introduce alchemistic notions into their teachings, as the Leyden papyrus documents, among others, prove. And the Chaldean and Judean *mathematici,* who, according to Tacitus, were twice expelled from Rome for magic, once under Claudius and again under Vitellius, practiced no other kind of geometry than the kind we shall find at the basis of John's Revelation.

To this we must add another thing. All the apocalypses attribute to themselves the right to deceive their readers. Not only were they written as a rule by quite different people than their alleged authors, and mostly by people who lived much later, for example the Book of Daniel, the Book of Henoch, the Apocalypses of Ezra, Baruch, Juda, etc., and the Sibylline books, but, as far as their main content is concerned, they prophesy only things that had already happened long before and were quite well known to the real author. Thus in the year 164, shortly before the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, the author of the Book of Daniel makes Daniel, who is supposed to have lived in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, prophesy the rise and fall of the Persian and Macedonian empires and the beginning of the Roman Empire, in order by this proof of his gift of prophecy to prepare the reader to accept the final prophecy that the people of Israel will overcome all hardships and finally be victorious. If therefore John's Revelation were really the work of its alleged author it would be the only exception among all apocalyptic literature.

The John who claims to be the author was, in any case, a man of great distinction among the Christians of Asia Minor. This is borne out by the tone of the message to the seven churches. Possibly he was the apostle John, whose historical existence, however, is not completely authenticated but is very probable. If this apostle was really the author, so much the better for our point of view. That would be the best confirmation that the Christianity of this book is real genuine early Christianity. Let it be noted in passing that, apparently, the Revelation was not written by the same author as the Gospel or the three Epistles which are also attributed to John.

The Revelation consists of a series of visions. In the first Christ appears in the garb of a high priest, goes in the midst of seven candlesticks representing the seven churches of Asia and dictates to "John" messages to the seven "angles" of those churches. Here at the very beginning we see plainly the difference between *this* Christianity and Constantine's universal religion formulated by

the Council of Nicaea. The Trinity is not only unknown, it is even impossible. Instead of the one Holy Ghost of later we here have the "*seven spirits of God*" construed by the Rabbis from Isaiah XI, 2. Christ is the son of God, the first and the last, the *alpha* and the *omega,* by no means God himself or equal to God, but on the contrary, "the beginning of the *creation* of God," hence an emanation of God, existing from all eternity but subordinate to God, like the above-mentioned seven spirits. In Chapter XV, 3, the martyrs in heaven sing "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" glorifying God. Hence Christ here appears not only as subordinate to God but even, in a certain respect, on an equal footing with Moses. Christ is crucified in Jerusalem (XI, 8) but rises again (I, 5, 18); he is "the Lamb" that has been sacrificed for the sins of the world and with whose blood the faithful of all tongues and nations have been redeemed to God. Here we find the basic idea which enabled early Christianity to develop into a universal religion. All Semitic and European religions of that time shared the view that the gods offended by the actions of man could be propitiated by sacrifice; the first revolutionary basic idea (borrowed from the Philonic school) in Christianity was that by the one great voluntary sacrifice of a mediator the sins of all times and all men were atoned for once for all—in respect of the faithful. Thus the necessity of any further sacrifices was removed and with it the basis for a multitude of religious rites: but freedom from rites that made difficult or forbade intercourse with people of other confessions was the first condition of a universal religion. In spite of this the habit of sacrifice was so deeply rooted in the customs of peoples that Catholicism—which borrowed so much from paganism—found it appropriate to accommodate itself to this fact by the introduction of at least the symbolical sacrifice of the mass. On the other hand there is no trace whatever of the dogma of original sin in our book.

But the most characteristic in these messages, as in the whole book, is that it never and nowhere occurs to the author to refer to himself and his co-believers by any other name than that of *Jews*. He reproaches the members of the sects in Smyrna and Philadelphia against whom he fulminates with the fact that they "say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan"; of those in Pergamos he says: they hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block *before the children of Israel,* to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. Here it is therefore not a case of conscious Christians but of people who say they are Jews. Granted, their Judaism is a new stage of development of the earlier but for that very reason it is the only true one. Hence, when the saints appeared before the throne of God there came first 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe, and only after them the countless masses of heathens converted to this renovated Judaism. That was how little our author was aware

in the year 69 of the Christian era that he represented quite a new phase in the development of a religion which was to become one of the most revolutionary elements in the history of the human mind.

We therefore see that the Christianity of that time, which was still unaware of itself, was as different as heaven from earth from the later dogmatically fixed universal religion of the Nicene Council; one cannot be recognized in the other. Here we have neither the dogma nor the morals of later Christianity but instead a feeling that one is struggling against the whole world and that the struggle will be a victorious one; an eagerness for the struggle and a certainty of victory which are totally lacking in Christians of today and which are to be found in our time only at the other pole of society, among the Socialists.

In fact, the struggle against a world that at the beginning was superior in force, and at the same time against the novators themselves, is common to the early Christians and the Socialists. Neither of these two great movements were made by leaders or prophets—although there are prophets enough among both of them—they are mass movements. And mass movements are bound to be confused at the beginning; confused because the thinking of the masses at first moves among contradictions, lack of clarity, and lack of cohesion, and also because of the role that prophets still play in them at the beginning. This confusion is to be seen in the formation of numerous sects which fight against one another with at least the same zeal as against the common external enemy. So it was with early Christianity, so it was in the beginning of the socialist movement, no matter how much that worried the well-meaning worthies who preached unity where no unity was possible.

Was the International held together by a uniform dogma? On the contrary. There were Communists of the French pre-1848 tradition, among whom again were various shades: Communists of Weitling's school and others of the regenerated Communist League, Proudhonists dominating in France and Belgium, Blanquists, the German Workers' Party, and finally the Bakuninist anarchists, who for a while had the upper hand in Spain and Italy, to mention only the principal groups. It took a whole quarter of a century from the foundation of the International before the separation from the anarchists was final and complete everywhere and unity could be established at least in respect of most general economic viewpoints. And that with our means of communication—railways, telegraph, giant industrial cities, the press, organized people's assemblies.

There was among the early Christians the same division into countless sects, which was the very means by which discussion and thereby later unity was achieved. We already find it in this book, which is beyond doubt the oldest Christian document, and our author fights it with the same irreconcilable ardor as the great sinful world outside. There were first of all the Nicolaitans,

in Ephesus and Pergamos; those that said they were Jews but were the synagogue of Satan, in Smyrna and Philadelphia; the supporters of Balaam, who is called a false prophet, in Pergamos; those who said they were apostles and were not, in Ephesus; and finally, in Thyatira, the supporters of the false prophetess who is described as a Jezebel. We are given no more details about these sects, it being only said about the followers of Balaam and Jezebel that they ate things sacrificed to idols and committed fornication. Attempts have been made to conceive these five sects as Pauline Christians and all the messages as directed against Paul, the false apostle, the alleged Balaam and "Nicolaos." Arguments to this effect, hardly tenable, are to be found collected in Renan's *Saint Paul* (Paris 1869, pp. 303–5 and 367–70). They all tend to explain the messages by the Acts of the Apostles and the so-called Epistles of Paul, writings which, at least in their present form, are no less than 60 years younger than the Revelation and the relevant factual data of which, therefore, are not only extremely doubtful but also totally contradictory. But the decisive thing is that it could not occur to the author to give five different names to one and the same sect and even two for Ephesus alone (false apostles and Nicolaitans) and two also for Pergamos (Balaamites and Nicolaitans), and to refer to them every time expressly as two different sects. At the same time one cannot deny the probability that there were also elements among these sects that would be termed Pauline today.

In both cases in which more details are given the accusation bears on eating meats offered to idols and on fornication, two points on which the Jews—the old ones as well as the Christian ones—were in continual dispute with converted heathens. The meat from heathen sacrifices was not only served at festal meals where refusal of the food offered would have seemed improper and could even have been dangerous; it was also sold on the public markets, where it was not always possible to ascertain whether it was pure in the eyes of the law. By fornication the Jews understood not only extra-nuptial sexual relations but also marriage within the degrees of relationship prohibited by the Jewish law or between a Jew and a gentile, and it is in this sense that the word is generally understood in the Acts of the Apostles XV, 20 and 29. But our John has his own views on the sexual relations allowed to orthodox Jews. He says, XIV, 4, of the 144,000 heavenly Jews: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." And in fact, in our John's heaven there is not a single woman. He therefore belongs to the trend, which also often appears in other early Christian writings, that considers sexual relations generally as sinful. And when we moreover take into consideration the fact that he calls Rome the Great Whore with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication and have become drunk with the wine of fornication and the merchants

of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies, it becomes impossible for us to take the word in the messages in the narrow sense that theological apologists would like to attribute to it in order thus to catch at some confirmation of other passages in the New Testament. On the contrary. These passages in the messages are an obvious indication of a phenomenon common to all times of great agitation, that the traditional bonds of sexual relations, like all other fetters, are shaken off. In the first centuries of Christianity, too, there appeared often enough, side by side with ascetics which mortified the flesh, the tendency to extend Christian freedom to a more or less unrestrained intercourse between man and woman. The same thing was observed in the modern socialist movement. What unspeakable horror was felt in the then "pious nursery" of Germany at Saint-Simon's a *réhabilitation de la chair* in the thirties, which was rendered in German as "*Wiedereinsetzung des Fleisches*" (reinstatement of the flesh)! And the most horrified of all were the then ruling distinguished estates (there were as yet no classes in our country) who could not live in Berlin any more than on their country estates without repeated reinstatement of their flesh! If only those good people had been able to know Fourier, who contemplated quite different pranks for the flesh! With the overcoming of utopianism these extravagances yielded to a more rational and in reality far more radical conception, and since Germany has grown out of Heine's pious nursery and developed into the center of the Socialist movement the hypocritical indignation of the distinguished pious world is laughed at.

That is all the dogmatic content of the messages. The rest consists in exhorting the faithful to be zealous in propaganda, to courageous and proud confession of their faith in face of the foe, to unrelenting struggle against the enemy both within and without—and as far as this goes they could just as well have been written by one of the prophetically minded enthusiasts of the International.

III

The messages are but the introduction to the theme properly so-called of John's communication to the seven churches of Asia Minor and through them to the remaining reformed Judaism of the year 69, out of which Christianity later developed. And herewith we enter the innermost holy of holies of early Christianity.

What kind of people were the first Christians recruited from? Mainly from the "laboring and burdened," the members of the lowest strata of the people, as becomes a revolutionary element. And what did they consist of? In the

towns of impoverished free men, all sorts of people, like the "mean whites" of the southern slave states and the European beachcombers and adventurers in colonial and Chinese seaports, then of emancipated slaves and, above all, actual slaves; on the large estates in Italy, Sicily, and Africa of slaves, and in the rural districts of the provinces of small peasants who had fallen more and more into bondage through debt. There was absolutely no common road to emancipation for all these elements. For all of them paradise lay lost behind them; for the ruined free men it was the former *polis*, the town and the state at the same time, of which their forefathers had been free citizens; for the war-captive slaves the time of freedom before their subjugation and captivity; for the small peasants the abolished gentile social system and communal landownership. All that had been smitten down by the leveling iron fist of conquering Rome. The largest social group that antiquity had attained was the tribe and the union of kindred tribes; among the barbarians grouping was based on alliances of families and among the town-founding Greeks and Italians on the *polis*, which consisted of one or more kindred tribes. Philip and Alexander gave the Hellenic peninsula political unity but that did not lead to the formation of a Greek nation. Nations became possible only through the downfall of Roman world domination. This domination had put an end once for all to the smaller unions; military might, Roman jurisdiction, and the tax-collecting machinery completely dissolved the traditional inner organization. To the loss of independence and distinctive organization was added the forcible plunder by military and civil authorities who took the treasures of the subjugated away from them and then lent them back at usurious rates in order to extort still more out of them. The pressure of taxation and the need for money which it caused in regions dominated only or mainly by natural economy plunged the peasants into ever deeper bondage to the usurers, gave rise to great differences in fortune, making the rich richer and the poor completely destitute. Any resistance of isolated small tribes or towns to the gigantic Roman world power was hopeless. Where was the way out, salvation, for the enslaved, oppressed and impoverished, a way out common to all these groups of people whose interests were mutually alien or even opposed? And yet it had to be found if a great revolutionary movement was to embrace them all.

This way out was found. But not in this world. In the state in which things were it could only be a religious way out. Then a new world was disclosed. The continued life of the soul after the death of the body had gradually become a recognized article of faith throughout the Roman world. A kind of recompense or punishment of the deceased souls for their actions while on earth also received more and more general recognition. As far as recompense was concerned, admittedly, the prospects were not so good: antiquity was too

spontaneously materialistic not to attribute infinitely greater value to life on earth than to life in the kingdom of shadows; to live on after death was considered by the Greeks rather as a misfortune. Then came Christianity, which took recompense and punishment in the world beyond seriously and created heaven and hell, and a way out was found which would lead the laboring and burdened from this vale of woe to eternal paradise. And in fact only with the prospect of a reward in the world beyond could the stoico-philonic renunciation of the world and ascetics be exalted to the basic moral principle of a new universal religion which would inspire the oppressed masses with enthusiasm.

But this heavenly paradise does not open to the faithful by the mere fact of their death. We shall see that the kingdom of God, the capital of which is the New Jerusalem, can only be conquered and opened after arduous struggles with the powers of hell. But in the imagination of the early Christians these struggles were immediately ahead. John describes his book at the very beginning as the revelation of "things which must *shortly* come to pass"; and immediately afterwards, I, 3, he declares "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy . . . for *the time is at hand.*" To the church in Philadelphia Christ sends the message: "Behold, I come *quickly.*" And in the last chapter the angel says he has shown John "things which must *shortly* be done" and gives him the order: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is *at hand.*" And Christ himself says twice (XXII, 12, 20) "I come *quickly.*" The sequel will show us how soon this coming was expected.

The visions of the Apocalypse, which the author now shows us, are copied throughout, and mostly literally, from earlier models, partly from the classical prophets of the Old Testament, particularly Ezekiel, partly from later Jewish apocalypses written after the fashion of the Book of Daniel and in particular from the Book of Henoch which had already been written at least in part. Criticism has shown to the smallest details where our John got every picture, every menacing sign, every plague sent to unbelieving humanity, in a word, the whole of the material for his book; so that he not only shows great poverty of mind but even himself proves that he never experienced even in imagination the alleged ecstasies and visions which he describes.

The order of these visions is briefly as follows: First John sees God sitting on his throne holding in his hand a book with seven seals and before him the Lamb that has been slain and has risen from the dead (Christ) and is found worthy to open the seals of the book. The opening of the seals is followed by all sorts of miraculous menacing signs. When the fifth seal is opened John sees under the altar of God the souls of the martyrs of Christ that were slain for the word of God and who cry with a loud voice saying: "How long, O Lord, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

And then white robes are given to them and they are told that they must rest for a little while yet, for more martyrs must be slain.

So here it is not yet a question of a "religion of love," of "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," etc. Here undiluted revenge is preached, sound, honest revenge on the persecutors of the Christians. So it is in the whole of the book. The nearer the crisis comes, the heavier the plagues and punishments rain from the heavens and with all the more satisfaction John announces that the mass of humanity will not atone for their sins, that new scourges of God must lash them, that Christ must rule them with a rod of iron and tread the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, but that the impious still remain obdurate in their hearts. It is the natural feeling, free of all hypocrisy, that a fight is going on and that—à *la guerre comme à la guerre.*

When the seventh seal is opened there come seven angels with seven trumpets and each time one of them sounds his trumpet new horrors occur. After the seventh blast seven more angels come on to the scene with the seven vials of the wrath of God which they pour out upon the earth; still more plagues and punishments, mainly boring repetitions of what has already happened several times. Then comes the woman, Babylon the Great Whore, sitting arrayed in scarlet over the waters, drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus, the great city of the seven hills that rules over all the kings of the earth. She is sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads represent the seven hills, and also seven "kings." Of those kings five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come, and after him comes again one of the first five; he was wounded to death but was healed. He will reign over the world for 42 months or 3 1/2 years (half of a week of seven years) and will persecute the faithful to death and bring the rule of godlessness. But then follows the great final fight, the saints and the martyrs are avenged by the destruction of the Great Whore Babylon and all her followers, i.e., the main mass of mankind; the devil is cast into the bottomless pit and shut up there for a thousand years during which Christ reigns with the martyrs risen from the dead. But after a thousand years the devil is freed again and there is another great battle of the spirits in which he is finally defeated. Then follows the second resurrection, when the other dead also arise and appear before the throne of judgment of God (not of Christ, be it noted) and the faithful will enter a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem for life eternal.

As this whole monument is made up of exclusively pre-Christian Jewish material it presents almost exclusively Jewish ideas. Since things started to go badly in this world for the people of Israel, from the time of the tribute to the Assyrians and Babylonians, from the destruction of the two kingdoms of Israel and Juda to the bondage under Seleucis, that is from Isaiah to Daniel, in every

dark period there were prophecies of a saviour. In Daniel, XII, 1–3, there is even a prophecy about Michael, the guardian angel of the Jews, coming down on earth to save them from great trouble; many dead will come to life again, there will be a kind of last judgment and the teachers who have taught the people justice will shine like stars for all eternity. The only Christian point is the great stress laid on the imminent reign of Christ and the glory of the faithful, particularly the martyrs who have risen from the dead.

For the interpretation of these prophecies, as far as they refer to events of that time, we are indebted to German criticism, particularly Ewald, Lücke, and Ferdinand Benary. It has been made accessible to non-theologians by Renan. We have already seen that Babylon, the Great Whore, stands for Rome, the city of seven hills. We are told in Chapter XVII, 9–11, about the beast on which she sits that:

"The seven heads" of the beast "are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

According to this the beast is Roman world domination, represented by seven caesars in succession, one of them having been mortally wounded and no longer reigning, but he will be healed and will return. It will be given unto him as the eighth to establish the kingdom of blasphemy and defiance of God. It will be given unto him "to make war with the saints and to overcome them. . . . And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb. . . . And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six." (XIII, 7–18).

We merely note that boycott is mentioned here as one of the measures to be applied against the Christians by the Roman Empire—and is therefore patently an invention of the devil—and pass on to the question who this Roman emperor is who has reigned once before, was wounded to death and removed but will return as the eighth in the series in the role of Antichrist.

Taking Augustus as the first we have: 2. Tiberius, 3. Caligula, 4. Claudius, 5. Nero, 6. Galba. "Five are fallen, and one is." Hence, Nero is already fallen and Galba is. Galba ruled from June 9, 68 to January 15, 69. But immediately after he ascended the throne the legions of the Rhine revolted under Vitellius

while other generals prepared military risings in other provinces. In Rome itself the praetorians rose, killed Galba and proclaimed Otho emperor.

From this we see that our Revelation was written under Galba. Probably towards the end of his rule. Or, at the latest, during the three months (up to April 15, 69) of the rule of Otho, "the seventh." But who is the eighth, who was and is not? That we learn from the number 666.

Among the Semites—Chaldeans and Jews—there was at the time a kind of magic based on the double meaning of letters. As about 300 years before our era Hebrew letters were also used as symbols for numbers: a = 1, b = 2, g = 3, d = 4, etc. The cabbala diviners added up the value of each letter of a name and sought from the sum to prophesy the future of the one who bore the name, e.g., by forming words or combinations of words of equal value. Secret words and the like were also expressed in this language of numbers. This art was given the Greek name *gematriah,* geometry; the Chaldeans, who pursued this as a business and were called *mathematici* by Tacitus, were later expelled from Rome under Claudius and again under Vitellius, presumably for "serious disorders."

It was by means of this mathematics that our number 666 appeared. It is a disguise for the name of one of the first five caesars. But besides the number 666, Irenaeus, at the end of the second century, knew another reading—616, which, at all events, appeared at a time when the number puzzle was still widely known. The proof of the solution will be if it holds good for both numbers.

This solution was given by Ferdinand Benary of Berlin. The name is Nero. The number is based on Neron Kesar, the Hebrew spelling of the Greek Neròn Kaisar, Emperor Nero, authenticated by means of the Talmud and Palmyrian inscriptions. This inscription was found on coins of Nero's time minted in the eastern half of the empire. And so—n (*nun*) = 50; r (*resh*) = 200; v (*vau*) for o = 6; n (*nun*) = 50; k (*kaph*) = 100; s (*samech*) = 60; r (*resh*) = 200. Total 666. If we take as a basis the Latin spelling *Nero Caesar* the second *nun* = 50 disappears and we get 666 - 50 = 616, which is Irenaeus's reading.

In fact the whole Roman Empire suddenly broke into confusion in Galba's time. Galba himself marched on Rome at the head of the Spanish and Gallic legions to overthrow Nero, who fled and ordered an emancipated slave to kill him. But not only the praetorians in Rome plotted against Galba, the supreme commanders in the provinces did too; new pretendants to the throne appeared everywhere and prepared to march on Rome with their legions. The empire seemed doomed to civil war, its dissolution appeared imminent. Over and above all this the rumor spread, especially in the East, that Nero had not been killed but only wounded, that he had fled to the Parthians and was about to advance with an army over the Euphrates to begin another and more bloody

rule of terror. Achaia and Asia in particular were terrified by such reports. And at the very time at which the Revelation must have been written there appeared a false Nero who settled with a fairly considerable number of supporters not far from Patmos and Asia Minor on the island of Kytnos in the Aegean Sea (now called Thermia), until he was killed while Otho still reigned. What was there to be astonished at in the fact that among the Christians, against whom Nero had begun the first great persecution, the view spread that he would return as the Antichrist and that his return and the intensified attempt at a bloody suppression of the new sect that it would involve would be the sign and prelude of the return of Christ, of the great victorious struggle against the powers of hell, of the thousand year kingdom "shortly" to be established, the confident expectation of which inspired the martyrs to go joyfully to death?

Christian and Christian-influenced literature in the first two centuries gives sufficient indication that the secret of the number 666 was then known to many. Irenaeus no longer knew it, but on the other hand he and many others up to the end of the third century also knew that the returning Nero was meant by the beast of the Apocalypse. This trace is then lost and the work which interests us is fantastically interpreted by religious-minded future-tellers; I myself as a child knew old people who, following the example of old Johann Albrecht Bengel, expected the end of the world and the last judgment in the year 1836. The prophecy was fulfilled, and to the very year. The victim of the last judgment, however, was not the sinful world, but the pious interpreters of the Revelation themselves. For in 1836 F. Benary provided the key to the number 666 and thus put a torturous end to all the prophetical calculations, that new *gematriah*.

Our John can only give a superficial description of the kingdom of heaven that is reserved for the faithful. The new Jerusalem is laid out on a fairly large scale, at least according to the conceptions of the time: it is 12,000 furlongs or 2,227 square kilometers, so that its area is about five million square kilometers, more than half the size of the United States of America. And it is built of gold and all manner of precious stones. There God lives with his people, lightening them instead of the sun, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, neither shall there be any more pain. And a pure river of water of life flows through the city, and on either side of the river are trees of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits and yielding fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree "serve for the healing of the nations." (A kind of medicinal beverage, Renan thinks—*L'Antechrist*, p. 542.) Here the saints shall live for ever.

Such, as far as we know, was Christianity in Asia Minor, its main seat, about the year 68. No trace of any Trinity but, on the contrary, the old one and indivisible Jehovah of later Judaism which had exalted him from the national god

of the Jews to the one and supreme God of heaven and earth, where he claims to rule over all nations, promising mercy to those who are converted and mercilessly smiting down the obdurate in accordance with the ancient *parcere subjectis ac debellare superbos* [pardon the humble and make war on the proud]. Hence, this God, in person, not Christ as in the later accounts of the Gospels and the Epistles, will judge at the last judgment. According to the Persian doctrine of emanation which was current in later Judaism, Christ the Lamb proceeds eternally from him as do also, but on a lower footing, the "seven spirits of God" who owe their existence to a misunderstanding of a poetical passage (Isaiah, XI, 2). All of them are subordinate to God, not God themselves or equal to him. The Lamb sacrifices itself to atone for the sins of the world and for that it is considerably promoted in heaven, for its voluntary death is credited as an extraordinary feat throughout the book, not as something which proceeds necessarily from its intrinsic nature. Naturally the whole heavenly court of elders, cherubim, angels, and saints is there. In order to become a religion monotheism has ever had to make concessions to polytheism—since the time of the Zend-Avesta. With the Jews the decline to the sensuous gods of the heathens continued chronically until, after the exile, the heavenly court according to the Persian model adapted religion somewhat better to the people's fantasy, and Christianity itself, even after it had replaced the eternally self-equal immutable god of the Jews by the mysterious self-differentiating god of the Trinity, could find nothing to supplant the worship of the old gods but that of the saints; thus, according to Fallmerayer, the worship of Jupiter in Peloponnesus, Maina, and Arcadia died out only about the ninth century. (*Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea*, I, p. 227.) Only the modern bourgeois period and its Protestantism did away with the saints again and at last took differentiated monotheism seriously.

In the book there is just as little mention of original sin and justification by faith. The faith of these early militant communities is quite different from that of the later victorious church: side by side with the sacrifice of the Lamb, the imminent return of Christ and the thousand-year kingdom which is shortly to dawn form its essential content; this faith survives only through active propaganda, unrelenting struggle against the internal and external enemy, the proud profession of the revolutionary standpoint before the heathen judges and martyrdom, confident in victory.

We have seen that the author is not yet aware that he is something else than a Jew. Accordingly there is no mention of baptism in the whole book, just as many more facts indicate that baptism was instituted in the second period of Christianity. The 144,000 believing Jews are "sealed," not baptized. It is said of the saints in heaven and the faithful upon earth that they had

washed themselves of their sins and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; there is no mention of the water of baptism. The two prophets who precede the coming of the Antichrist in Chapter XI do not baptize; and according to XIX, 10, the testimony of Jesus is not baptism but the spirit of prophecy. Baptism should naturally have been mentioned in all these cases if it had already been in vigor; we may therefore conclude with almost absolute certainty that the author did not know of it, that it first appeared when the Christians finally separated from the Jews.

Neither does our author know any more about the second sacrament, the Eucharist. If in the Lutheran text Christ promises all the Thyatirans that remain firm in the faith to come *das Abendmahl halten* with them, this creates a false impression. The Greek text has *deipnêsô*—I shall eat supper (with him), and the English Bible translates this correctly: I shall *sup* with him. There is no question here of the Eucharist even as a mere commemoration meal.

There can be no doubt that this book, with its date so originally authenticated as the year 68 or 69, is the oldest of all Christian literature. No other is written in such barbaric language, so full of Hebraisms, impossible constructions, and mistakes in grammar. Chapter I, verse 4, for example, says literally: "Grace be unto you . . . from he that is being and that was and that is coming." Only professional theologians and other historians who have a stake in it now deny that the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are but later adaptations of writings which are now lost and whose feeble historical core is now unrecognizable in the maze of legend, that even the few Epistles supposed by Bruno Bauer to be "authentic" are either writings of a later date or at best adaptations of old works of unknown authors altered by additions and insertions. It is all the more important since we are here in possession of a book whose date of writing has been determined to the nearest month, a book that displays to us Christianity in its undeveloped form. This form stands in the same relation to the fourth century state religion with its fully evolved dogma and mythology as Tacitus's still unstable mythology of the Germans to the developed teaching of the gods of Edda as influenced by Christian and antique elements. The core of the universal religion is there, but it includes without any discrimination the thousand possibilities of development which became realities in the countless subsequent sects. And the reason why this oldest writing of the time when Christianity was coming into being is especially valuable for us is that it shows without any dilution what Judaism, strongly influenced by Alexandria, contributed to Christianity. All that comes later is western, Greco-Roman addition. It was only by the intermediary of the monotheistic Jewish religion that the cultured monotheism of later Greek vulgar philosophy could clothe itself in the religious form in which alone it could grip the

masses. But once this intermediary found, it could become a universal religion only in the Greco-Roman world, and that by further development in and merging with the thought material that world had achieved.

PERSONAL LETTERS

LETTER FROM JENNY MARX TO JOHANN PHILIPP BECKER (1866)

This letter is included here not only for its own intrinsic interest, but also because it shows that in intellectual, political, and spiritual matters Mrs. Marx shared her husband's opinions.

London, ca. January 29, 1866

My Dear Herr Becker:

For a week now my husband has again been stricken with the dangerous and extremely painful illness [carbuncles]. . . .

In religious matters there is now a significant movement in this dank England. The foremost men of science, headed by Huxley (Darwin's follower), with Tyndall, Sir Charles Lyell, Bowring, Carpenter, etc., etc., gave in St. Martins Hall (of the glorious waltz-commemoration1) extremely enlightened, truly free-thinking and audacious lectures for the people, and on Sunday evenings at that, precisely at the hour when ordinarily the little sheep used to go to the pasture of the Lord. The Hall was so jammed and the jubilation of the people so great that, on the first Sunday evening when I went there with my girls, 2,000 people could not get into the place, which was already filled to suffocation. Three times the parsons let this [to them] dreadful occurrence [the lectures] happen. But last night [Sunday] the audience was informed that no more lectures would be allowed until the lawsuit of the parsons against the "Sunday evenings for the people" had been settled. The indignation of the assemblage expressed itself decisively, and more than £100 was collected for defense against the lawsuit. How stupid of the little parsons to meddle in this! To the anger of that gang, the evenings ended with music. Choruses sang Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Gounod, and were received with enthusiasm by the English, who had hitherto only been allowed to bawl "Jesus, Meek and Mild" or to wander into the gin palaces.

Karl, who lies in great pain, and my girls send you their hearty regards; the little one [Eleanor] especially sends much friendliness to the "good Becker." But I, from a distance, extend my hand to you.

Yours,
Jenny Marx

LETTER FROM KARL MARX TO FRIEDRICH ENGELS (1864)

Zaltbommel, Holland, January 20, 1864

Dear Frederick:

You see, I am still here, and "I will tell you more," I am in fact incapable to move about. This is a perfidious Christian illness. When I received your letter I was congratulating myself on the healing of the old wounds, but the same evening a big furuncle broke out on my left chest under the neck, and an antipodal one in the back. Although painful, that at least did not prevent me from walking, which I did, in fact, across the Rhine (Waal), in company with my uncle and cousin. But a few days later another carbuncle broke out on my right leg, directly under the spot to which Goethe refers: And when the nobleman has no posterior, how can he sit? This is the most painful of the known abscesses that I have ever had, and I hope it will finally terminate the series. In the meantime, I can neither walk, nor stand, nor sit, and even lying down is damned hard. You see, *mon cher,* how the wisdom of nature has afflicted me. Would it not have been more sensible if, instead of me, it had been consigned to try the patience of a good Christian, a person, say, of the stripe of Silvio Pellico? Besides the carbuncle on the posterior, you should know that a new furuncle has broken out on the back, and the one on the chest is only beginning to heal, so that like a true Lazarus (alias Lassalle), I am scourged on all sides.

Apropos Lazarus, I like Renan's *Life of Jesus,* which is in some respects mere romance, full of pantheistic-mystical giddiness. Still, the book has some advantages over its German predecessors, and it is not bulky; you must read it. It is, of course, a result of German research. Highly remarkable: here in Holland the German critical-theological tendency is so very much *à l'ordre de jour* [the order of the day] that the preachers acknowledge it openly from the pulpits. . . .

I am writing only these few lines, and even that is done with great effort, since sitting is painful. But I expect a return answer from you; it cheers me up to see your handwriting.

Don't forget to enclose a photograph. I have promised it to my cousin, and how could she believe in our Orestes-Pylades friendship if I could not *com-*

movere [move] you even to send a photograph? My address as before: c/o L. Philips. Salut to you and Lupus.

Your

K. M.

LETTER FROM KARL MARX TO FERDINAND DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS

London, February 22, 1881

Honored Party Comrade:

. . . The doctrinal and necessarily illusory anticipation of the action program of a revolution of the future emerges only from contemporary struggle. The dream of the imminent destruction of the world inspired the early Christians in their struggle with the Roman world empire and gave them a certainty of victory. Scientific insight into the unavoidable and continuing disintegration of the dominant order of society . . . serves as a guarantee that at the moment of outbreak of a real proletarian revolution its very conditions . . . will directly bring forth the next *modus operandi.*

Your most devoted

Karl Marx

NOTE

1. The ball that commemorated the founding of the First International, September 28, 1865, in St. Martins Hall.

"Religious suffering is at one and the same time the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of that vale of tears of which religion is the halo."

—Karl Marx, from *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*

"Like the Hebrew prophets of old, Marx knew that to speak of social justice we must become socially self-critical, and that means becoming critical of the ruling powers—whether they be kings or priests or investment bankers.... For Marx, all ideas are relative to the social location and interests of their production. And like the prophets before him, the most revealing perspective is not from the top down or the center outward, but the ... point of view of the exploited and marginalized. Suffering can see through and unveil official explanations; it can cry out and protest against the arrogance of power."

—From the Introduction by John Raines

John Raines is Professor of Religion at Temple University. He is the author of over a half-dozen books, including, most recently, *What Men Owe to Women: Men's Voices from World Religions.*

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